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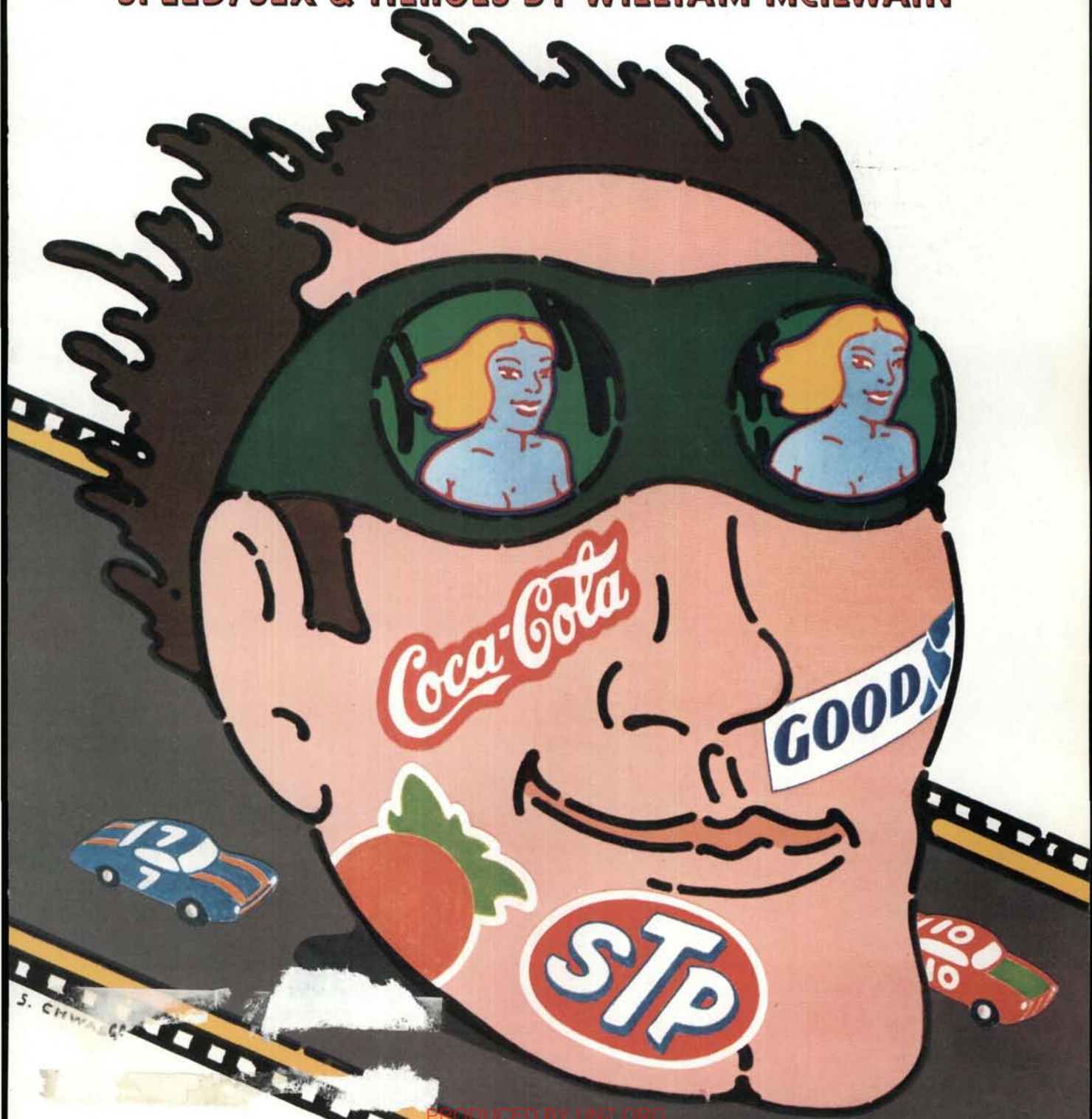
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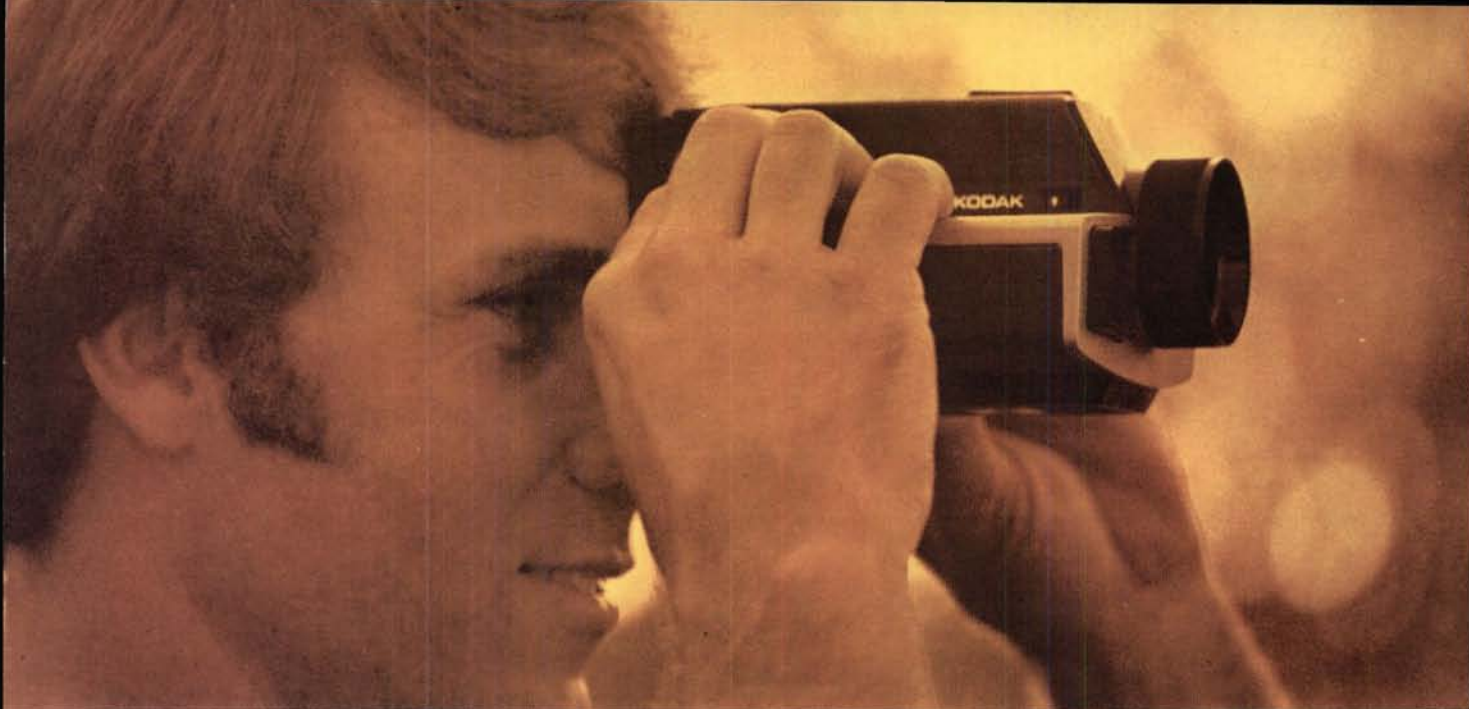
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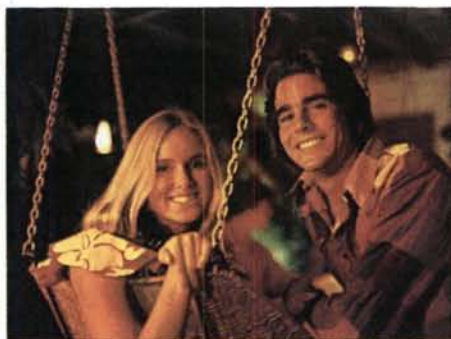
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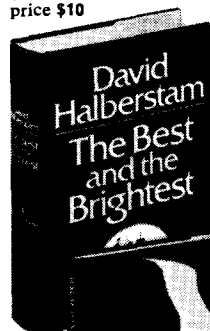
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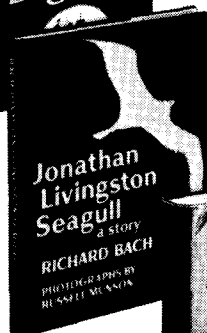
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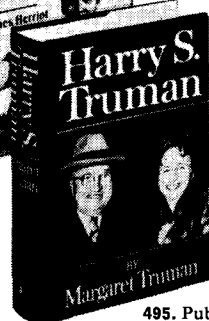
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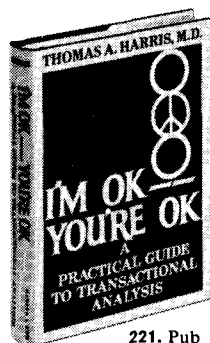


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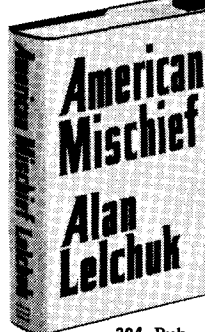
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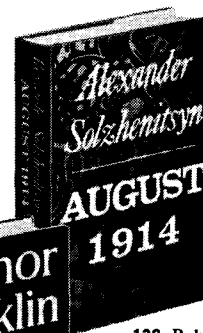


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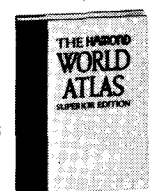
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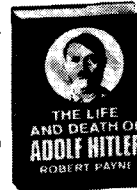
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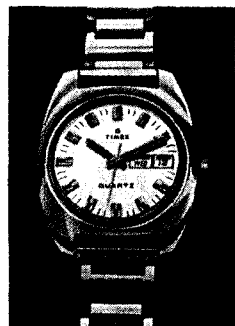
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REPORTS & COMMENT

CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY

In Asia, now that the United States is easing out of Indochina and sidling into a relaxed and businesslike tie with China, a big question is: What are Peking's policies for the 1970s? Are they rooted in positive ideas about Asia's future and strong convictions about the Third World, or only in negative feelings about Russia and maybe Japan?

Ever since his guerrilla war days, Mao Tse-tung has arrived at policies toward the world about him by first deciding who is the main enemy, then building a united front of all possible forces to resist that enemy. For some two decades, the hardly questioned major enemy was the United States, and China's main fear was U.S. military power on its eastern and southern flanks.

In the short term, Peking's concern was to forestall a U.S. attack upon China; in the longer term, it was to build a belt of nonhostile states around China's southeast doorstep. Various "contradictions" were thought by Mao to exist in the area, including one between "revolutionary peoples" and "reactionary governments" (such as that in Bangkok). But the principal contradiction was between revolutionary peoples and U.S. power. At least since Chou En-lai discovered at the Bandung Conference in 1955 that anticolonialism was the great issue around which broad support could rally, the Chinese sought to marshal their fellow Asians against America. Pos-

sessed of a siege mentality toward the United States, they viewed it, in Foreign Minister Ch'en Yi's words during 1965, as the "archaggressor and archwarmonger of our time."

In this perspective, the period from the new Chinese regime's birth in 1949 until the Nixon Doctrine of 1969 is a unity so far as Peking's outlook on Asia and the United States is concerned. Its two major landmarks were the Korean and Vietnam wars, indirect confrontations, among other things, between the shadow of Chinese influence and the substance of U.S. military might.

No camp

It is clear that a new era has begun. I remember a story told in Warsaw during the mad days of Vietnam in 1967, when the then President of the United States considered the Vietnamese resistance a part of an Oriental Red chain of command headquartered in Peking. Leonid Brezhnev and LBJ, the story goes, were standing in line dressed in striped pajamas with tin plates in their hands, at a camp not far from Peking. With a tired sigh LBJ reproached his Russian fellow-in-distress: "You know, Leonid, I did keep telling you Berlin was not our major problem." Six years later so much has changed that, if it is Cassandra-like to imagine Nixon and Chou En-lai standing dismally in line at a camp not far from Moscow, it is not hard to imagine either of them reproaching the other for ever having considered Taiwan "our major problem." How exactly has Peking's outlook altered, and why?

In 1969 the Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party crystallized what we might call a "dual adversary" policy toward the United States and Russia. A new and un-Marxist word soon reared up from the flat Marxist landscape of Peking's political prose: "superpowers." The main contradiction in the world was now between the two superpowers on one side, and all those subject to their hegemonic policies on the other. The key value upheld against the superpowers was independence. China was to head the ranks of those who had no camp, and champion independence against the "aggression, interference, subversion, and bullying of the superpowers." When introduced late in the Cultural Revolution, it looked like a closed-door policy for a winter of defiance. But it proved no less serviceable as the basis for a very forthcoming policy during the springtime of Ping-Pong and U.N. diplomacy.

The motif of resisting the superpowers has marked all Chinese foreign policy of recent years. China has become the strictest upholder in the world of national sovereignty and the independence of nations. It supports Latin American countries in their efforts to push back foreign fishing by establishing a two-hundred-nautical-mile definition of territorial sea. Peking smiles upon East European efforts to resist Soviet domination—this is the basis of current intimacy between Peking and Bucharest—and it smiles as well upon West European efforts to unite (and hence presumably increase West Europe's ability to limit U.S. influence upon the region). I recall



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Is anyone out there? The question of whether life is unique to planet earth has long fascinated the mind of man. As early as the 4th Century B.C., the Epicurean philosopher Metrodoros said, "To consider the earth as the only populated world in infinite space is as absurd as to assert that in an entire field of grain sown with millet, only one grain will grow." In the sixteenth century the heretic Giordano Bruno announced that "innumerable suns exist" and "innumerable earths revolve about these suns... Living beings inhabit these worlds."

Harvard astronomer Harlow Shapley approached the problem statistically. Of the 10^{23} stars in the universe, said Shapley, it is probable that 100 million have planets similar enough in composition and environment to earth to support life.

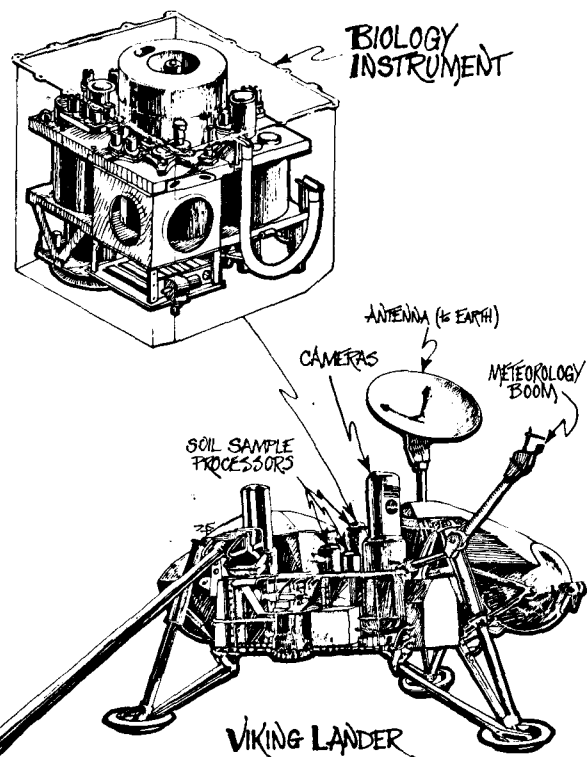
Although scientists cannot as yet positively assert the existence of extra-terrestrial life, enough evidence has accumulated in the last decade to make some of the world's leading scientists suspect that the question has a positive answer. The evidence is circumstantial, but, as Thoreau said, some circumstantial evidence can be very strong, as when you find a trout in the milk.

First of all, scientists have shown that the building blocks of life are rather easy to produce. In 1953, Stanley Miller of the University of Chicago made amino acids by passing electrical discharges through a mixture of gases that simulated our earth's early atmosphere. Later, Sidney Fox of Florida's University of Miami produced protein fragments which formed themselves into bacteria-sized spheres.

Not only does life seem easier to synthesize now than it did twenty-five years ago, but the survivability of life under presumably lethal conditions has been demonstrated. Organisms have been found living happily in boiling water, strong acids, and even in the water shielding the highly radioactive cores of nuclear reactors.

Recently, biologists have simulated the biologically rigorous conditions of the Martian environment in "Mars jars." Some of the organisms placed in the jars readily adapted themselves to the extremely cold carbon dioxide atmosphere.

As a subcontractor to Martin-Marietta, TRW Systems is at work on a NASA project which may shed some light on the question of extraterrestrial life. We are building the Viking Lander Biology Instrument, three tiny, fully automated laboratories, which will be landed on the Martian surface in 1976. On earth, these laboratories would occupy several rooms and a full crew of scientists. We are shrinking them into a single foot of space. We hope you're interested as we are in what Viking will find.



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CHINA

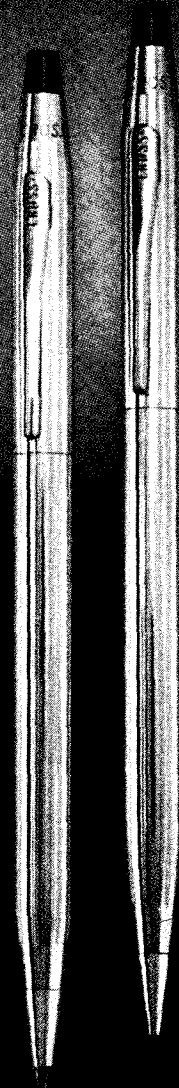
the shock of Chou En-lai's rhetorical question to Australian Labour Party leader (now Prime Minister) Gough Whitlam in 1971: "Why is it that there is a lack of any ability in the Eastern part of Europe?" The Premier answered his own query by pointing to the lack of independence in that region: "Because the biggest country there wants to control the others."

Concern for independence is likewise at the heart of Peking's opposition to all foreign bases, and behind its support for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and a peace zone in the Indian Ocean. This concern was similarly at the root of Peking's remarkable last-ditch stand with Pakistan against India's crossing of a national boundary to dictate a solution to Pakistan's crisis, and of its opposition to disarmament plans which limit the independence of lesser powers to seek arms which the superpowers already possess.

Peking's policy of resisting hegemony in the name of independence seems a fruitful and logical policy for China to follow at present. It accords with China's experience, which makes the Chinese deeply convinced about it. China lost its independence at the hand of Western powers after 1840, and regained it only by its own efforts. The alliance with Russia was as full of problems as it was rich in benefits, since Stalin in the formative years believed more in Chiang Kai-shek than he did in Mao Tse-tung, and after 1949 was not (in China's view) prepared to treat China as a sovereign equal.

Beyond that, opposing the superpowers and espousing independence enhance China's national influence. She has become a formidable spokesman for the Third World; it is a good way of having the power of a bloc leader while proclaiming hostility to blocs. Finally, this policy of China's helps to break down further the rigidities of Cold War alignments, which is good not only for smaller nations but also for the peace of the world. As saboteur of the cosy stability favored by the superpowers—whereby Russia can extinguish Dubcek's "socialism with a

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CHINA

human face" in Czechoslovakia without arousing so much as a tremor in the balance of power—China enables lesser nations to gain a bit more room for maneuver than Cold War polarity allowed.

Enemy Number One

One function of the Cultural Revolution was to hammer home to the Chinese public the rationale behind the "dual adversary" strategy. Two evils against which this storm was directed were "imperialism" and "revisionism." These terms span both domestic and foreign realms. They connote backsliding from true socialist values, and they are shorthand labels for the menace from the United States and Russia respectively.

A characteristic slogan early in the Cultural Revolution (1966-1969) was, "To oppose imperialism one must oppose revisionism." Internationally this meant, first, that if Washington escalated the Vietnam War to attack China, it would be futile for China to expect Russian help against the United States; and second, that the "people's war" which China must fight in such an eventuality would require purity of political values on the part of the Chinese people, and revisionist tendencies would detract from the struggle against imperialism.

The Cultural Revolution started and ended amid war clouds. In 1966 the war clouds were in the south, and they were American. How to deal with the United States was Peking's most nagging worry. A vast debate on this subject unfolded among the leaders and set in motion the downfall of head of state Liu Shao-ch'i. And the Soviet issue itself tended to be seen in relation to the American issue. Russia's unreliability in the event of a Sino-American war was perhaps the principal point made against Moscow at this time.

But the war clouds in March, 1969, as the Ninth Party Congress gathered to wind up the Cultural Revolution, rose in the north, and they were Russian. At the Congress, the golden figure of the moment and designated successor to Mao,

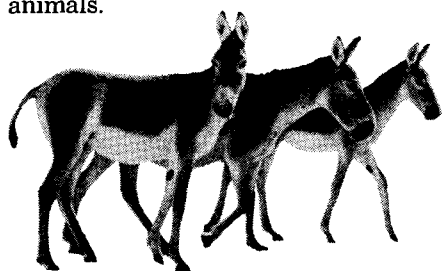
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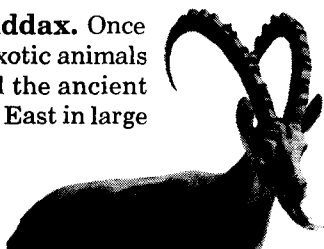


Onagers

The Onager. Nearly 2000 years ago Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a sturdy Onager, the Persian Wild Ass domesticated in the Mesopotamian civilization. Exactly 11 survive in the Holy Land.

The Nubian Ibex. The first book of Samuel tells us how David fled in exile from King Saul to "the rocks of the wild goats." Exile was Ein Gedi near the Dead Sea, an oasis which has endured to this day. The goats, or Nubian Ibex, have fared less well. A few hundred are all that remain.

The Addax. Once these exotic animals roamed the ancient Middle East in large



Nubian Ibex

numbers, getting their entire water supply from the sparse vegetation. Now the Addax has almost vanished—but not from lack of water.

The Arabian Oryx. Old and New Testaments speak frequently of this fabled antelope. In Isaiah we learn how the Oryx was caught in nets. Through the ages all but a handful have been caught—and destroyed.

If Noah built an ark today he would not be able to fill it.

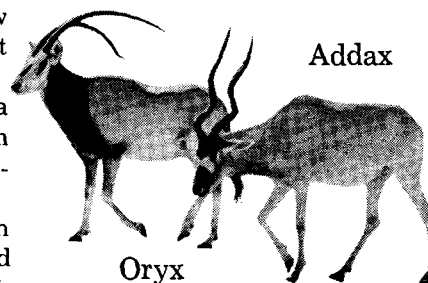
Promised land. A miracle is needed to save these animals from extinction. Even in the Holy Land that takes some doing.

Yet in the Judean Desert, near King Solomon's Mines, not far from the Red Sea, a miracle may be happening.

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Addax

Oryx

Paying for the miracle. To save these rare creatures is expensive. A pair of Oryx costs \$25,000—and that was the price five years ago!

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Photographs by Roger Caras

CHINA

Minister of Defense Lin Piao, defined the major contradiction in the world as "between the oppressed nations on the one hand and imperialism [read United States] and social imperialism [read Russia] on the other." The dual adversary strategy was officially unveiled. Yet already there had appeared signs of a "tilt" against Russia.

In Lin's report to the Congress, the United States still has top spot as "the most ferocious enemy of the people of the world." But the immediate anxiety in Peking at that time was the situation on the Amur and Ussuri Rivers in the northeast. Even more important, within two years the Chinese had become convinced that the United States was on a downward military course in East Asia and no longer a threat to China; they came to take the Nixon Doctrine more seriously than some of Nixon's critics within the United States. Mao, who had never liked the Russians, began to edge them into the place of dishonor as Enemy

Number One. And during 1971, one of the century's most spectacular flirtations began as eagle and dragon eyed each other afresh.

In July of that year, I turned on my radio one steamy morning in the lakeside town of Wusih in east China to hear that Kissinger had just been in Peking. The following February, Mao and Nixon shook hands. In May of this year, America's most distinguished career ambassador took up residence in the *san li t'un* district of Peking, and Mao sent the only Chinese ambassador who is a member of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to be his envoy in Washington.

"Dual adversary" has continued to be Peking's theoretical framework for viewing the world. Yet within this framework it is increasingly Russia rather than the United States which makes Peking anxious. I stressed after my trip to China in the summer of 1971 that Chou En-lai and others considered the Soviet Union to be China's most immediate military problem, and that Chinese at the higher levels put more

feeling into their criticisms of Russia than into their criticisms of America. By the end of 1971, in fact, Russia seemed the determining issue in Chinese foreign policy. Whereas some years previously the United States was the preoccupation, and the complaint against Moscow was mainly about its irresoluteness against the United States, by the time Nixon reached Peking the Chinese were convinced that the United States was a subsiding force in Asia, and even viewed détente with Washington as a useful card to play against the Soviet Union.

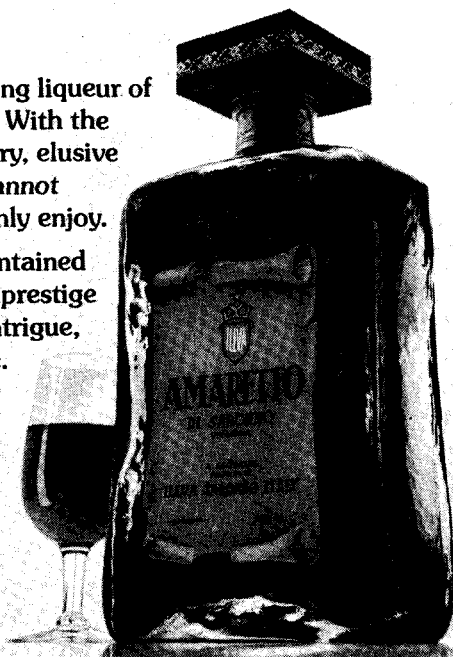
During 1972 the tilt against Russia was summed up in two formulations which cropped up in the Chinese press. The Soviet Union's social imperialism, it was said, "is even more deceptive and therefore more dangerous" than American imperialism. And a novel view of three successive colonialisms was presented: colonialism of the European type; later, U.S. imperialism; and now, Soviet social imperialism. The implication is startling. Just as, after World War II, the United States stepped into the shoes of tired European colonialists, so, after Vietnam, Russia is superseding Uncle Sam as the leading aspirant to police the world.

These formulations modify the reality of the dual adversary line crystallized at the Ninth Party Congress. Independence and resistance to the superpowers are still the main values upheld, but Russia is seen as an even greater threat to the independence of smaller lands than is the United States. By late 1972 the sting had gone out of the Vietnam War so far as the Chinese were concerned, and one of their main concerns was that its settlement not be such as to benefit Russia. In the U.N., Russia was more nearly the central thread running through Chinese speeches than was America. A nice irony, if a macabre one, arose over the shadowy issue of possible nuclear war among the triangle of leading powers. In January, 1972, the Russians reminded the Chinese in wounded tones that (in Moscow's estimation) the Soviet Union had by its deterrent power saved China four times from nuclear attack by the United States. One year later American officials confided in private—and certain col-

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CHINA

umnists built a crusade upon the contention—that (in Washington's estimation) the present American détente with Peking is saving China from nuclear attack by the Soviet Union.

Japan in the middle

Several interesting points arise about the present situation and the future, and they underline the extraordinary fluidity that marks international politics in East Asia in the 1970s.

If Peking sees détente with Washington as insurance against Russia, it also sees its recent normalization of relations with Japan as a further useful source of pressure against its principal foe to the north. Premier Chou recently remarked to some visiting Austrians: "Not far from our border are stationed one million land, air, and naval troops. Actually the rockets are directed against us and against Japan." This bold effort to depict China and Japan nestling close against the growling Russian bear marks a modification of the Chinese attitude of 1969 through 1971. For, in the 1969-1971 period, Peking criticized "Japanese militarism" so severely that Japan seemed, in China's eyes, almost to have joined the ranks of the superpowers, and to have become part of a

triangle of menace confronting China.

One of Chou En-lai's insistent themes, in our 1971 meeting, was that Russia, like the United States, was severely to blame in not resisting the revival of Japanese militarism, which Article One of the Russia-China treaty of 1950 required it to do. Yet by another of the ironies which abound in the early 1970s, we now find that China has stopped attacking Japanese militarism, while Russia has started to do so. The Soviet press spoke last January of Japan's apparent aspiration to be an "armed watchman" and of its "expansionist desires in regions of the Far East and Southeast Asia," and complained that Tokyo's planned military budget for 1973 was excessive.

For many years China sought to prize Japan away from its alliance with the United States, but Peking has dropped this enterprise since America is no longer seen as the overarching foe, to be isolated by all possible combinations against her. The somewhat parallel policy today is to try to forestall any prospect of an alliance between Japan and Russia, which, in theory at least, the Peking-Washington détente could make attractive in Moscow and Tokyo alike. To this end the Chinese are backing Japan's claim to the cluster of northern islands which Russia took at the end of World War II but Japan now wants back. It seems at times that China's stand on Japan's behalf over these uninhabited islands is more unshakable than Japan's stand on its own behalf.

Nevertheless it is doubtful that real harmony between China and Japan will last long. True, the two countries have no bilateral source of conflict, and economically the prospect is for further extensive cooperation between them. But in Southeast Asia, Japan is a supporter of the political status quo, under which it prospers mightily, whereas China wants and expects a political left turn, at least in South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand. Especially if the United States continues to edge back from the mainland of Asia, Japanese economic power and Chinese political influence will probably come into conflict at some level.

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ATLANTIC-LITTLE, BROWN

Some in Peking may still think it inevitable, as Chou En-lai used to say it was, that Japan's economic power will again one day express itself militarily. What if revolutionary groups in lands where the Japanese economic octopus has tentacles (such as Thailand) take on anti-Japanese overtones, seeing their struggle, following the Chinese revolutionary model, as one against both semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism? Would not at least the left-wing element in Peking want China to throw support to such revolutionary groups? Just as revolution came to China in part through Japan's impact, with Russia as the rear support of Chinese revolutionaries, so—the Chinese left may reason—revolution may come to Southeast Asia, again spurred by Japan's impact, this time with China as a reliable rear support for "Mao Tse-tungs of Southeast Asia."

Such a pattern is not impossible, but it is very far from being inevitable. Conflict of interest need not lead to physical conflict, and there are reasons to hope that differences between Peking and Tokyo over the direction of Asia's development will be handled peacefully. Japan's historical experience makes it doubtful that she would protect her economic stake in a Southeast Asian land to the point of coming into even indirect military conflict with China. Moreover, the Chinese revolutionary "model" itself stresses self-reliance. The Chinese do not believe that a revolution can be decisively influenced from outside a country, so the concrete involvement of Peking in future revolutionary bids in Southeast Asia will be limited.

But even if China and Japan avoid being proxies on opposite sides of Southeast Asian civil wars, their conflict of interest in the area is great and may grow. It is easy to imagine that by the end of the 1970s Japan will pose more problems for China than will the United States. Nor would Peking's theories have to be stretched far to fit such an eventuality. Japan could be declared a superpower seeking hegemony. Instead of including Japan in a united front against one of the other superpowers, China would establish a united front against Japan. Given the intimacy with which Kissinger and Chou have discussed

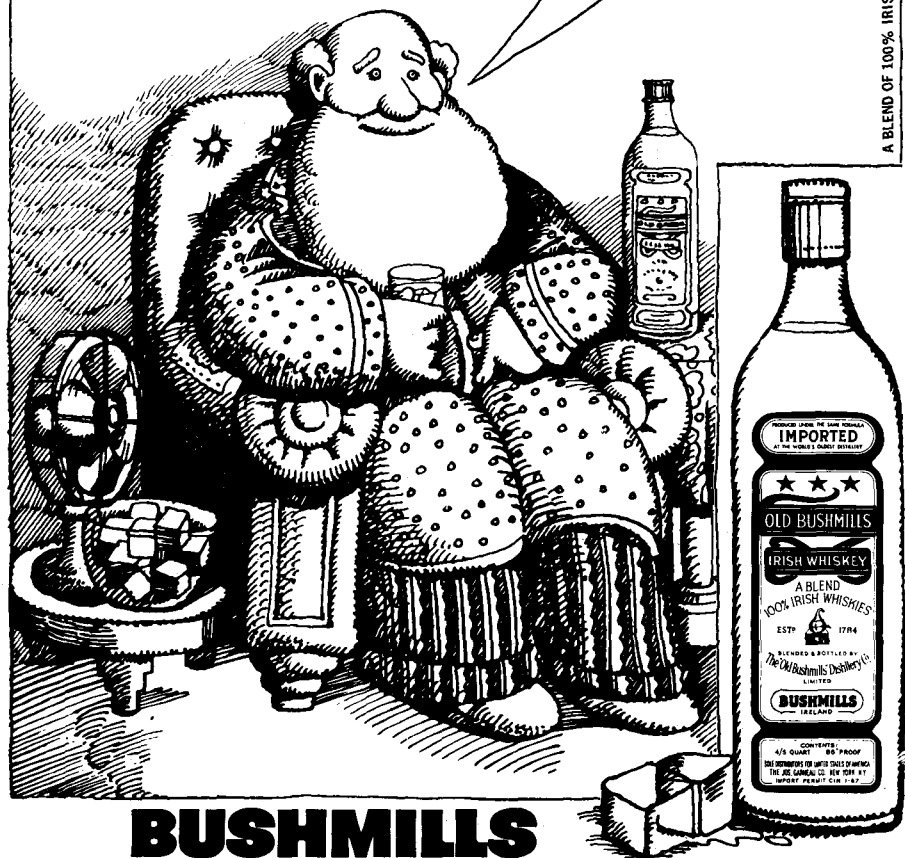
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CHINA

their apprehensions about Japan's future course—this characterization I base on reports from both sides—it is not unthinkable that China would hope to have its trusty ex-enemy, the United States, standing beside her in the event of trouble from Japan.

After the hangover

If these comments on China's foreign outlook have stressed relations among the four leading powers, the reason is that Peking's policies have been more reactive than initiative, more a matter of countering superior power on her doorstep than of pursuing global blueprints. Overall, China is still struggling to deal with her past and with her poverty. This means trying to secure an equal place among the major nations, after a century of weakness and humiliation at the hands of these same foreign nations; and it means putting positive vision and energy primarily into internal economic, social, and political development.

Most bones of contention between China and other states are the result not of global ideological schemes on China's part but of hangovers from China's unfinished effort to stand up as a great nation: Taiwan, the Soviet border, the Indian border. Other conflicts in which Peking has become deeply, if indirectly, involved have presented a clear threat to China's security: the wars in Korea, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. In conflicts beyond the above two categories, China's involvements have been small and more a matter of words than of acts.

It is not that China lacks influence. Bordering a dozen countries, possessing nuclear weapons, having the largest population of any nation, China has been the underlying reason for a host of American activities in Asia, and she now may well be Russia's number-one anxiety. China is the central factor in the national security thinking of many small Asian lands, and a major factor for India and Japan. More broadly, China has become a substantial giver of economic aid to the (non-Communist) Third World, and the major source for ideological in-

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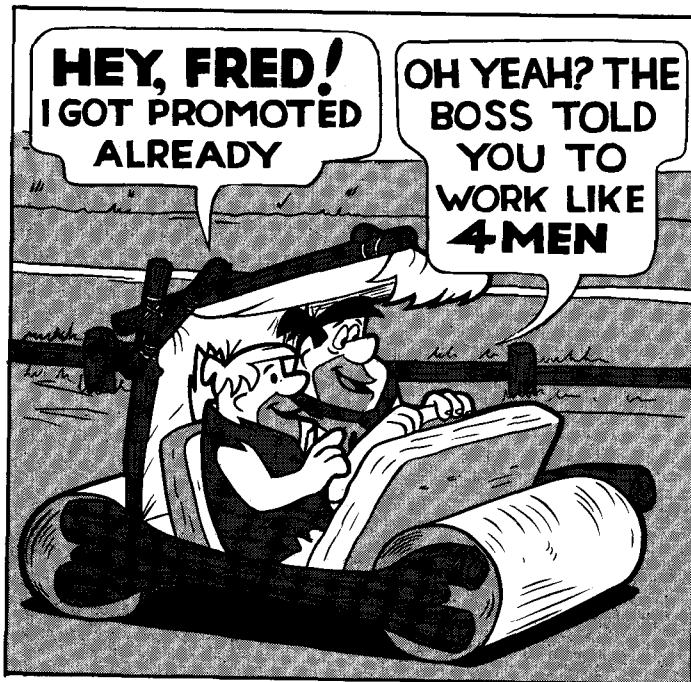
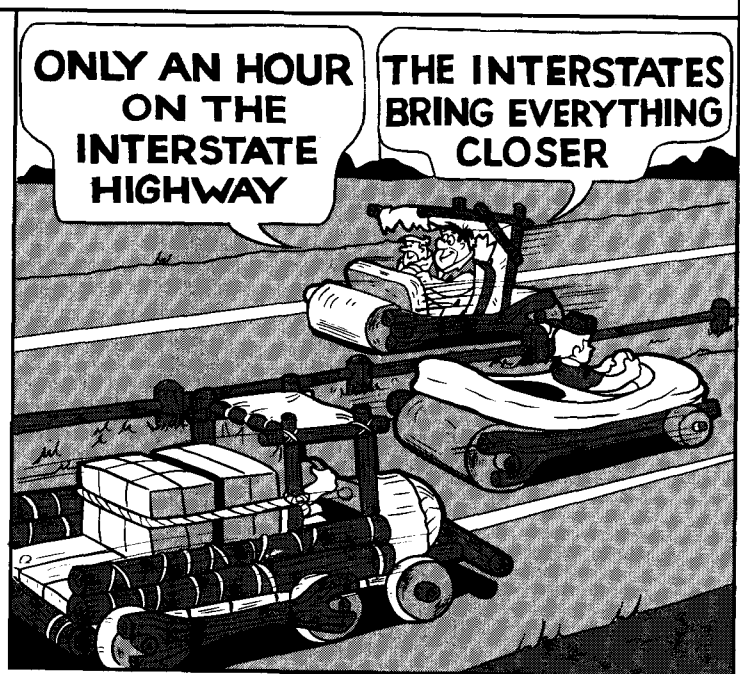
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spiration at a general level for a far-flung variety of national liberation movements.

The point is that China is influential but not on the march. Apart from in Indochina and Korea, where its national security continues to be acutely at stake, China will count less for its specific projection of power in Asia than for the mere fact of its massive and slowly strengthening presence, and the intangible shadow of its culture and its socialist experiments. Many countries in the region have just set up or are moving to set up relations with Peking, but Chinese policy toward these countries has not altered much and often seems laconic. China rather passively waited for them to turn politely toward her, and this attitude of "come to us if you wish" is likely to continue.

We can expect that China's foreign policy will for some time to come still be largely reactive: resisting the superpowers and, increasingly, competing for influence in Asia with Japan. In this perspective the key to the future lies largely in three questions, which correspond to three overarching developments in the power configurations of East Asia since the end of World War II and the Chinese Revolution.

One development has been the traumatic Sino-Soviet split, and the question is: Will it continue at its present devastating pitch? If so, Peking's preoccupation with Russia will make it cautious toward the United States and Japan, and it will be increasingly hard for China to speak for the many Third World countries who do not share China's suspicions about Russia. If there is a modest thaw, which in my view is a probability before the end of the 1970s, China may adopt a bolder and more active policy in the south and the east, and in particular may throw down a firm challenge to Japan's influence in Southeast Asia.

A second development has been the subsidence of American will and capacity to project its military power onto the mainland of Asia, after a quarter century of supremacy in East Asia from the defeat of Japan until the failure to prevail in Vietnam. The question is: Will U.S. disengagement go even further? If so, China will relax further about the United States, and a coopera-

tive, even warm relationship could develop between the two giants. If not, China will prolong the modified "dual adversary" strategy, and the agenda before David Bruce in Peking and Huang Chen in Washington will be conflict management rather than schemes of positive co-operation.

A third great development in East Asia has been the rise of Japan from the pit of defeat to the brink of superpower status. The question is: Will Tokyo's budding hegemony in Southeast Asia remain economic and pacific, and will Peking adhere to the spirit of the Chou-Tanaka meeting of 1972 and continue to believe in the strong possibility that Japan will keep its military power within its own borders and remain respectful toward China? If so—our three questions are now inseparable—China will make no special effort to soothe Russia, and in Asia it will play to the score of state-to-state dealings, with little sign of urgency and no grand visions. If not, East Asia could fall into a new epoch of turmoil. For China would move to counter a militarist and expansionist Japan by vigorously aiding anti-Japanese national liberation movements. In such a case, too, China would seek a thaw with Russia in order to be able to concentrate on the problem of Japan. How deeply the United States would involve itself in such an imbroglio, and whether it would tilt against China or Japan, no one this side of 1976 can say.

—ROSS TERRILL

ISRAEL

Kibbutz Shuval

In the dining room of Kibbutz Shuval, fifteen miles north of Beer-sheva on the road to Tel Aviv, members are gathering for the Saturday night meeting. At one side sit people in their late teens and early twenties—not yet members but interested observers. The members themselves gather in the center of the room. Many of the women have brought their knitting, and occasionally there are whispered conversations between two women admiring each other's work in progress.

At the table to one side sits the

kibbutz secretary, Hanoch Peek, who is there to answer questions. His first announcement comes as a disappointment: he has forgotten to give instructions to have the tea and cookies ready. "I apologize," he says. "It's all my fault."

"Where's the microphone?" a man asks, adding: "No refreshments, and now no mike!" The secretary reddens, but the other members are smiling, and finally he smiles as well.

"Candidate"

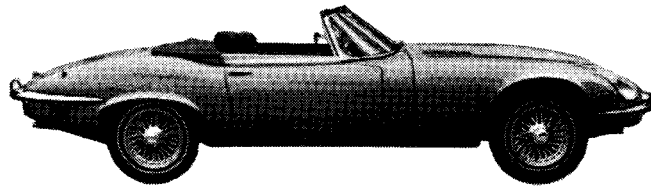
There is a chairman for the Saturday meetings, but he defers to the secretary, who opens the discussion by outlining the first item on the agenda. A young man who was in the kibbutz's *ulpan* (an intensive Hebrew course) two years ago has written from his home in Canada to say that he wants to join the kibbutz. And he wants to bring his girlfriend, who was born in Israel and went to Canada when her parents moved there.

Usually those who want to apply for membership are accepted as working visitors for a year. Then, for an additional six months or a year, they are "candidates." If they find the place and the people and the life congenial, and if they still want to become members at the end of their candidacy—and if the kibbutz members approve—they are finally accepted as full members.

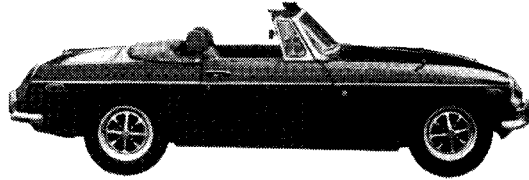
The first to give his views is Rubik Gaon. Two years earlier he was in charge of the *ulpan*. "I have a positive opinion of the boy," he says. "He took part in all the activities organized by the *ulpan*. He was a responsible worker, and wherever he worked the people were pleased. Even when he was here, he had doubts about going back to Canada, but he was young—after all, it was two and a half years ago. He decided to go back and see his family before deciding about emigrating. I'm definitely in favor of accepting him."

Each member of an *ulpan* group is assigned to one kibbutz family which is supposed to be of special help and counsel. "I was his 'mother,'" Aliza Shefer says, "and I would very much like to have him back."

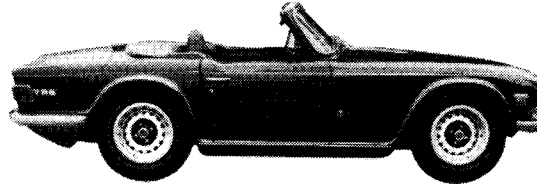
When the "mother" concludes her



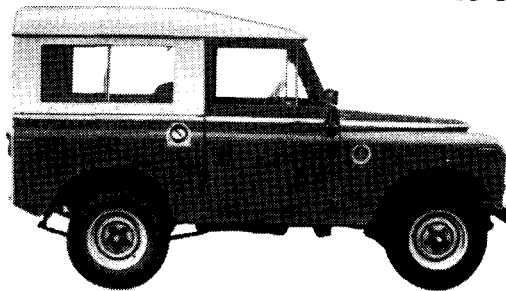
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ISRAEL

heartily endorsement, a member at the left takes the floor. "He'll be against it," predicts one woman, whispering to the man next to her. "He's always against everything."

And he is this time. "There's too much traffic here, people coming and going," he says. "People very blithely put up their hands to say they're in favor, but when these youngsters come here nobody does anything to help them. Before we decide, who's going to be in charge of them when they're here? We should know that before we vote. In fact, we should first have a general discussion on how to absorb people, and in particular how to absorb these two." He mentions another problem: if the kibbutz accepts outsiders and gives them new housing, this will cause a conflict with members' children returning from serving in the army, who themselves need housing.

Another member, Joshua Ron, who makes a point of speaking on every item discussed, has a suggestion: "Maybe we should find some new status for these people. Not 'visitor'; maybe just 'living here.'"

He harks back to disappointments with recent visitors. "The way things are now," he says, "I'm afraid this, too, will be a failure, and he'll leave after a few months. Over the years we've accepted quite a few *ulpan* people, and nobody ever explains to them the working of the kibbutz so that with time they can make a qualitative difference to the kibbutz. Before we continue trying to assimilate this kind of person, we must organize this properly."

Gaon is furious with such arguments: "People are saying, 'Why aren't certain things done?' If they're really so concerned, why don't they do the things themselves? It's no good just having a committee to deal with this problem. It's a question of the attitude of the whole kibbutz. Either it has the right attitude or it doesn't. A committee can't tell the kibbutz how to assimilate people. That the kibbutz has to do itself. Why keep delaying? What's the point? You'll never be ready to say yes. In my opinion, each person who leaves represents a failure by the kibbutz."

There are calls of "Why?" and protests of "No!"

Gaon continues: "Even if one person leaves because he's a failure, it doesn't mean everybody will leave. People who come back from the army should be prepared to live two in a single room to help the absorption. Other kibbutzim absorb people from abroad. Why can't we? It's not the young people who object to absorbing people from abroad. The older people are the ones who say the younger people will object."

"It's no good the older people talking about absorbing or not absorbing this couple," insists Ruth Kirschner. "It's up to the younger people to speak up and say whether they're prepared to do it."

Shmuel Mendelsohn, the chairman, decides to abandon neutrality. "I know kibbutzim which have absorbed forty people in the course of the past three years," he says. "We complain about a shortage of manpower, and then we argue about accepting this couple. It's time for us to change our ideas. What do we lose even if they don't make it? What do we lose?"

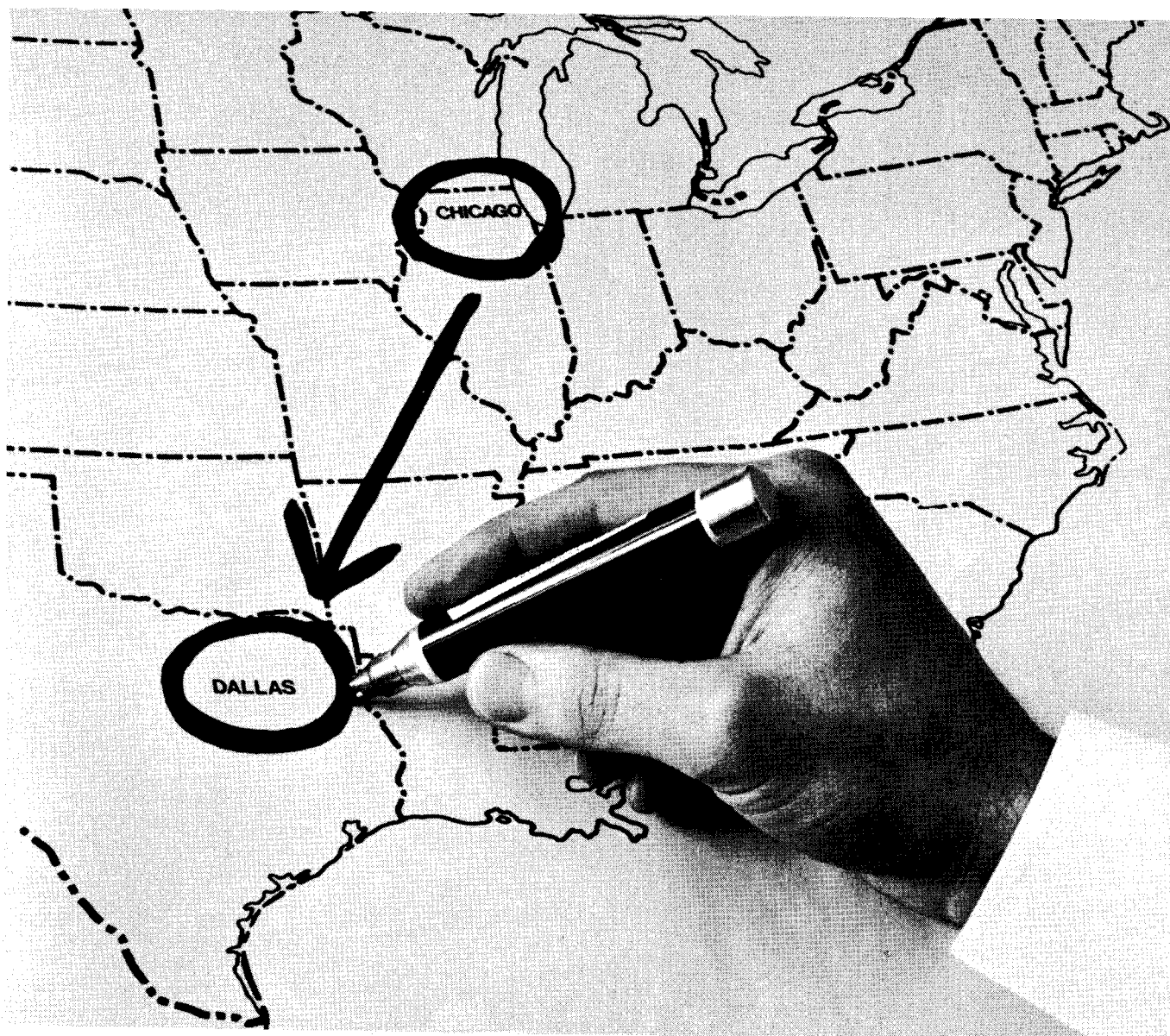
But there is yet another objection from one of the members. In the past fifteen years, no one has been absorbed by the kibbutz who did not come either as part of a group or to marry a member. Members whisper to one another trying to recall cases and to find exceptions. None comes to mind.

"A brief word," Gaon urges, and begins a lengthy pleading to insist that it is vital for the kibbutz to approve this application. ("You promised you were going to say a *brief* word," the chairman interrupts. "Stick to that.")

When Gaon finishes, the chairman calls for a vote. With forty-six in favor and two against (there are several abstentions), they decide to accept the application.

Transforming

The first kibbutz was founded in 1909 to fulfill a double purpose. Small groups of young European Jews had determined to help build a Jewish homeland, and to help transform the Jew from a middle-class shopkeeper or professional into a farmer working in a socialist com-



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ISRAEL

munity. In the kibbutzim, communes whose members joined voluntarily and could leave when they pleased, property was held in common and the fruits of labor were shared equally.

With pioneering zeal the kibbutzim established themselves in the least promising areas: stone-covered fields, swampland, and desert. Thus members at first had to live at subsistence level; but slowly the experiment proved itself. From the original determination to erase the notion of private property came an appreciation of the pleasures of personal choice. But the rule still exists that no matter what work a kibbutz member does, he shares on equal terms with all other members.

The notion of the liberation of the woman was strong from the start. This meant that children had to be cared for by the community. Children slept apart from their parents and, like the parents, had their meals in common. But in this new working-class society, children spent

two or three uninterrupted hours daily with their parents, without the economic or social tension that often characterizes child-parent relationships in other societies.

At first the family was considered a bourgeois concept, but now the family is the basis of kibbutz society. Some kibbutzim have come to feel that successful family life demands that children sleep in their parents' houses. Others, such as Shuval, retain the original procedure.

The children of kibbutz society have proved to be almost a race apart, with virtually no dropouts or delinquents, drug addicts, or homosexuals. A disproportionately high number of the officers and the casualties in the Six Day War were from kibbutzim.

In his book *Children of the Dream*, the psychologist and educator Bruno Bettelheim reported favorably on many aspects of kibbutz upbringing after a seven-week stay at one kibbutz. But he suggested that these Israeli communes produce youngsters with flat personalities who conform to views of the peer

group. Dr. Bettelheim's criticisms and conclusions were sharply contested in Israel and in the United States, but the book stands as one of the first important progress reports on the kibbutz experiment.

More and more young people from the kibbutzim are being sent to universities. Sometimes they succumb to the lures of capitalism and the attractions of an individualistic society; often they do not.

At first the residents of the kibbutzim thought that they should keep their communes small; but today there are kibbutzim with about two thousand people, and expansion is an aim for all. With about one-fifth of the nation's farmworkers, kibbutzim produce about one-third of Israel's agricultural output. Today one-fifth of kibbutz workers labor in kibbutz industry: plastics, electronics, metalworking, agricultural processing.

Kibbutz members and their families numbered 25,000 in 1948, about 4 percent of Israel's population. Today about 100,000 people live and work in kibbutzim, 3.5 percent of the present population.

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There are about 230 kibbutzim, grouped in three kibbutz federations of roughly equal size. These groups differ along political lines, while sharing a general socialist commitment. A few kibbutzim are organized more around religious than political principles.

Competing with *Ironside*

Direct democracy is still the rule, and decisions are made at the weekly meetings. "The kibbutz is the only society in the world which has no police force and no means of compelling anyone to do anything," said Moshe Ben-Ami, a Shuval member. "You can't punish a member, you can't imprison him or give him less food or take anything away. But it's difficult to make generalizations. One kibbutz differs from another just as one individual differs from another. It's only a tourist passing through a gate who can think one kibbutz is like another."

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Though Kibbutz Shuval has one hundred and eighty members, only about fifty have come to its Saturday night meeting. The small attendance is directly attributable to the allure of television. There is a TV set in the kibbutz clubhouse, and on Saturday nights a majority of the members go there to see the latest installment of the American program *Ironside*. The program used to be shown from 8:30 to 9:20 P.M. Because this was the time of their weekly meetings, a number of kibbutzim, including Shuval, wrote to Israeli television authorities asking them to reschedule *Ironside*. Now it starts at 9:00, which is even more awkward. Shuval and other kibbutzim make do with a minority quorum, even if this hardly enhances the reality of participatory democracy.

The chairman calls members' attention to the second item on the agenda: what to do about the twenty *dunim* (five acres) of olive trees. Olive-picking is difficult to mechanize, and the kibbutz is chronically short of manpower. It has therefore been suggested that the kibbutz sell or lease the trees to a contractor who will have the olives picked for his own benefit, paying the kibbutz a fee. By law, olive trees may not be uprooted.

Yoske Holtzman, the kibbutz farm manager, explains all this, making it sound a reasonable way to ease manpower problems and to provide income. But the next speaker is firmly opposed. ("He's our man of principles," notes one member in a stage whisper.)

The speaker quickly elaborates on his principles. "I'm against it because I'm against hired labor," he says. "The person who's organizing this company, we don't know what kind of labor he's going to bring in—children? Arabs from the Gaza Strip—so he can pay low wages and make a profit."

"Why do we limit ourselves to olives?" he continues sarcastically. "Why not go the whole hog? How about apricots? Maybe we can rent our apricot trees. As a matter of fact, why only apricots? Why don't we broaden it to all our orchards? This may seem a small issue, but it's the thin edge of the wedge. If we accept this proposal to let somebody else pick the olives, we simply

become landlords or owners of a large farm and not workers. I suggest we pick the olives ourselves, or if worse comes to worst, simply leave them on the trees."

The member who is said to speak up on every issue is true to form. He notes that last year the kibbutz made 3000 Israeli pounds (over \$700) from the olives. "It's not only a question of olives but of ideology," he insists. "I'm against exploitation."

Holtzman, the farm manager, notes: "One of the conditions of the agreement would be that the olives be picked by people who would be paid union wages."

"That's not true," insists a woman who does not wait for the chairman to recognize her. "The man can bring in anyone he wants to."

"I'm against it," chimes in a neighbor, "no matter what the profit, no matter what the conditions. I'm amazed that the secretariat can support such a suggestion."

The secretary calls out: "We have an agreement with Sunfrost, who pick our Brussels sprouts and corn for freezing. What's the difference between that arrangement and this one?"

"You're out of order!" the chairman interrupts. "You're interrupting somebody's speech!"

"Sunfrost doesn't bring in children or exploited labor, and the vegetables go straight to a factory, not to a middleman," the interrupted speaker replies. "If there is any place on the kibbutz where we have unorganized labor, I suggest we stop it immediately."

Another member says he knows of a kibbutz which uprooted half of its apricot trees because it didn't have enough of its own people to pick the fruit, and it was not willing to bring in hired labor. "I know of another kibbutz," he goes on, "which went in for this olive scheme, and they were swindled by the contractor. They rue the day they got involved."

There is a sudden chain of whispers as members relay a message to a woman that her husband, on active duty with the army, is on the phone. The woman drops her knitting needles and runs from the room. Since the phone is just outside, the next two speakers have to talk over the shouts of the woman

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"Don't go, my boy," he pleaded.
 "You're under a lot of pressure down there."

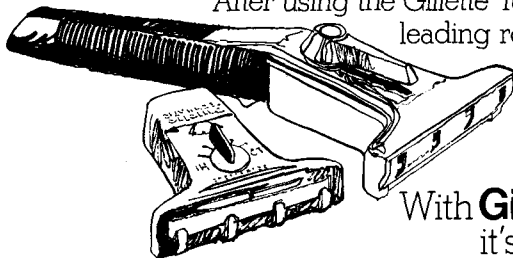
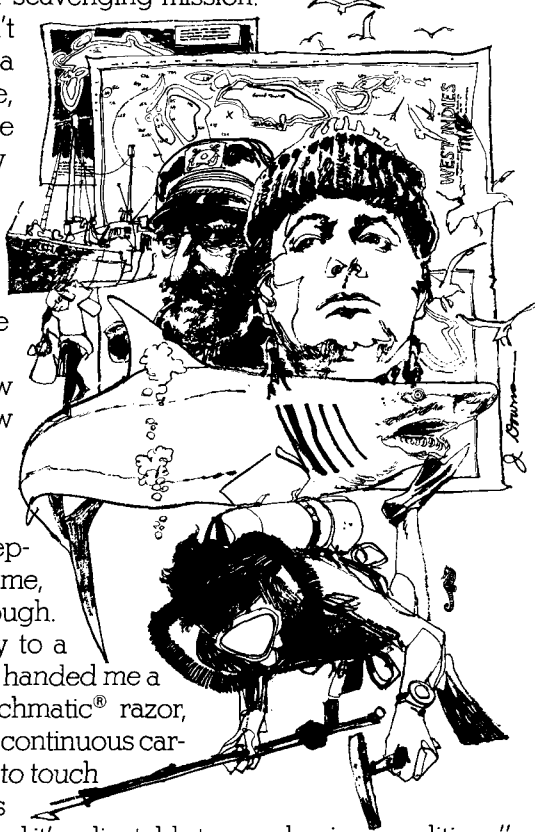
"GOOD-BYE NICK"

I was the son of a courageous frogman and a Cypress Gardens water skier. Scuba diving was my heritage, but the shaving nicks and cuts on my face almost sent me to a watery grave. Even my captain began calling me Nick. I can still see his face the day I left on my biggest underwater scavenging mission.

His voice trembled. "Don't go, my boy. You're under a lot of pressure down there, and when those sharks see that blood...it'll be Davy Jones Locker for you." I laughed him to scorn.

Down, down, down I went. And then, it happened! A frisky seahorse knocked the bandage off my face. And when I saw the shark's dark shadow over my shoulder, I thought it was Good-bye Nick. I had only one arrow left in my speargun. But Neptune was watching over me, for that one arrow was enough. That night, I told my story to a sympathetic bartender. He handed me a razor. "Try the Gillette Techmatic® razor, chum. Comes in a refillable continuous cartridge so you'll never have to touch another blade. No corners to cut and nick your face. And it's adjustable to any shaving conditions."

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trying to make herself audible to her husband.

"I'm a member of the secretariat," a woman begins. "One man who spoke before said he didn't understand how the secretariat could favor this proposal. As a matter of fact, the secretariat didn't decide anything. It discussed the proposal, opinions were divided, and it was decided to let the meeting discuss it. My personal opinion is that the trees should be left as a pleasant place for people to enjoy."

"I object to the tendency of the kibbutz to make a profit out of its property and not out of its work," insists Gadi Meiri. "If we want to make a decision of principle in this direction, that's a different thing. But I object! I'm against Sunfrost as well, both economically and in principle. I believe we should buy the equipment from Sunfrost, and if we can't make it pay, we should stop growing corn and Brussels sprouts."

The farm manager takes the floor again. "I'm pleased that for once the kibbutz is talking about an agricultural subject," he says. "We make much more from our own work than from hired labor. But in August, when we have to pick apples, there are not enough people to pick apples. We decide every week to send more people out to study, but how are we going to run the farm if nobody stays here on the kibbutz? I don't see why, if we decide this for olives, it has to be spread to other parts of the kibbutz. People shouldn't exaggerate."

"But it's an illusion," insists Ruth Kirschner, "that we can have control over the labor. On the one hand we now grow grapefruits instead of oranges so our own people can pick the fruit more easily. And on the other hand here we are trying to bring in underpaid workers."

The vote is overwhelming—forty-two to three—against the proposal to have olives picked by outsiders.

Time is passing, and two more items occupy the agenda. One is particularly touchy. Several months ago the kibbutz voted in favor of every child and every member having the chance to receive a university education. But many members

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Try not to shop for a tour on the basis of price alone. Look for what's included. Then, how much you pay. A good rule of thumb: the lower the price, the larger the group. But don't buy the highest priced tour either. Look for a solid value tour priced somewhere in the middle.

A stopover doesn't mean you're visiting. Most of the time, you're not even allowed out of the terminal. That's because a stopover is primarily for refueling, and you'll be on your way again quickly.

Never assume deluxe hotels means deluxe rooms. Even deluxe hotels have their back wings and rooms alongside elevator banks. Look for a tour that comes right out and says deluxe rooms.

A bus can be great. Just be sure it's a luxury bus. Air-conditioning is a pretty good tip-off that it is.

Avoid tours that pack too much activity into a single day. You'll be too busy trying to keep up instead of seeing what you came to see. Obviously, you should avoid those tours that put too little in them, too.

Look for a tour that includes at least two full meals a day. That's a pretty good clue you're getting full value for your money.

Look for a tour that leaves you to your own devices at fairly regular intervals. While you won't be able to wander too far from your hotel in, say half a day, you'll at least have time for a nap and a leisurely little shopping tour around the neighborhood.

Watch out for tours that offer too many optional side trips. Optional seldom means you can choose between going

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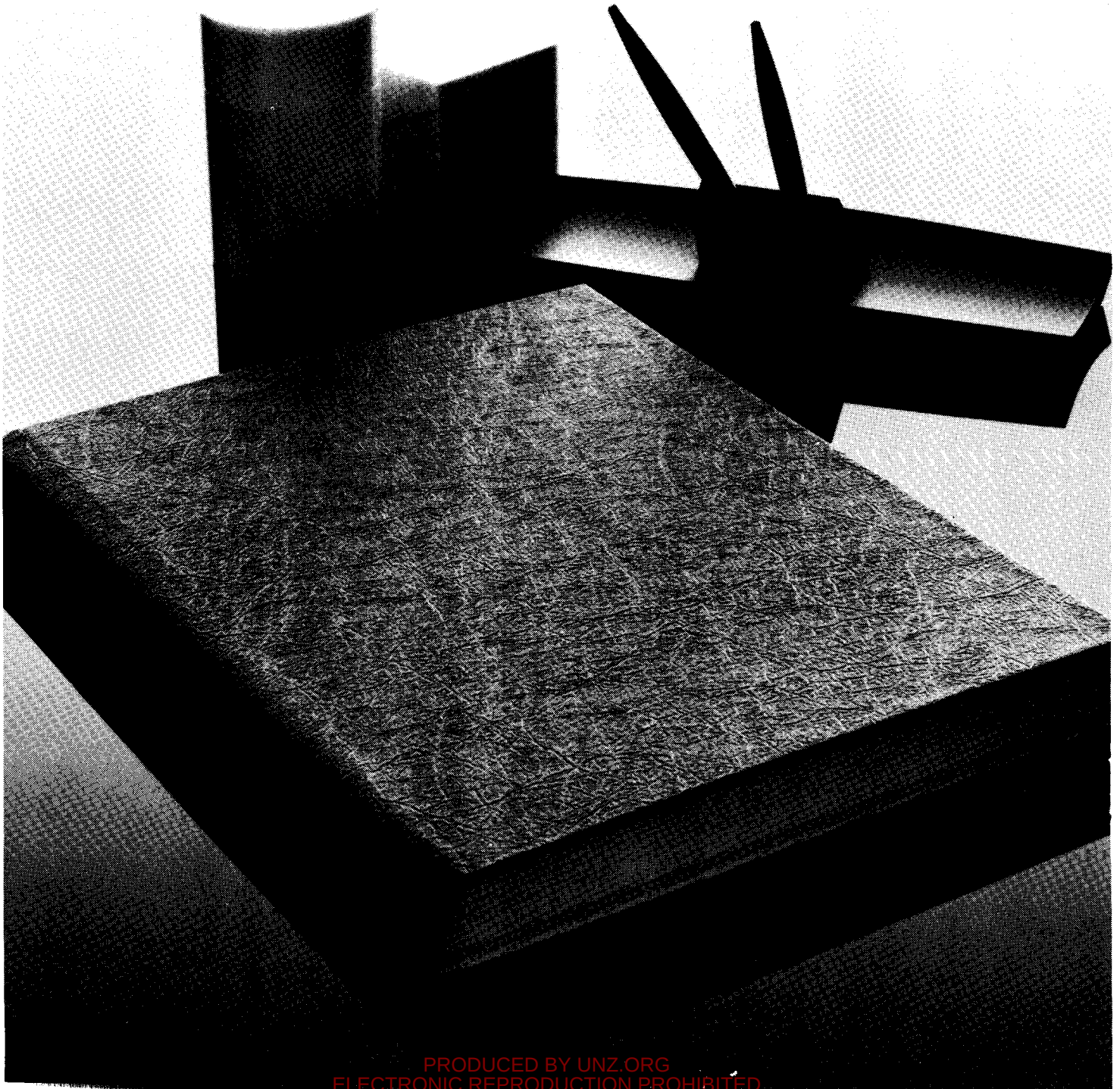
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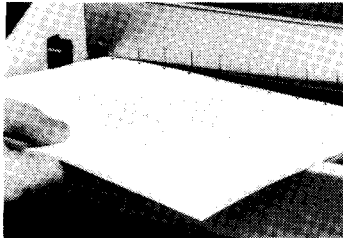
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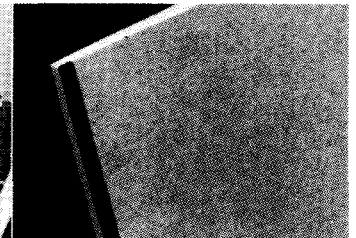
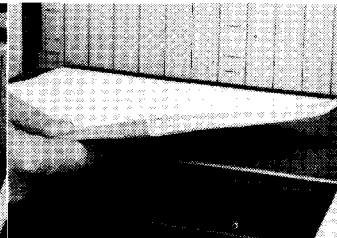
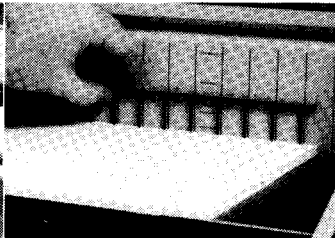


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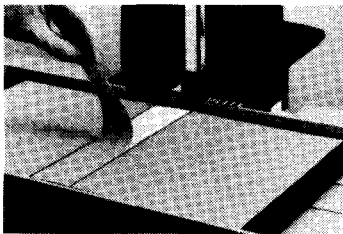


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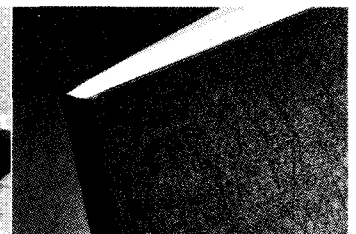
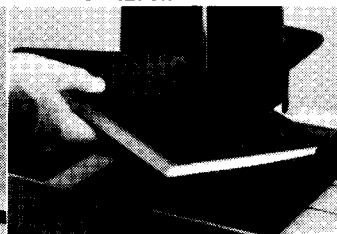


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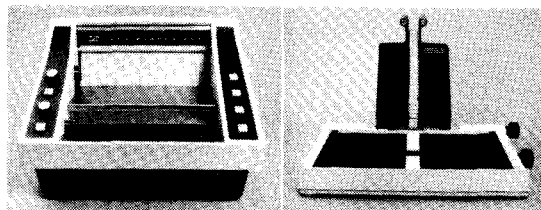
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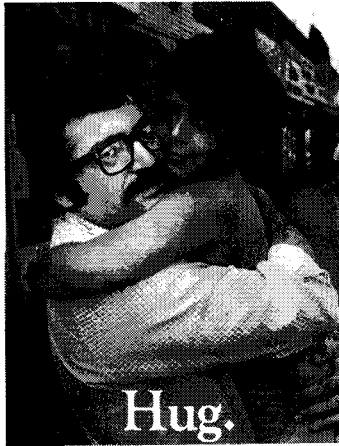


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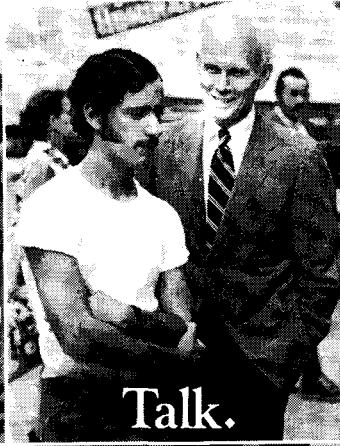
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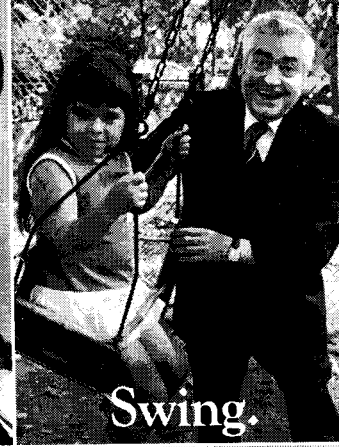
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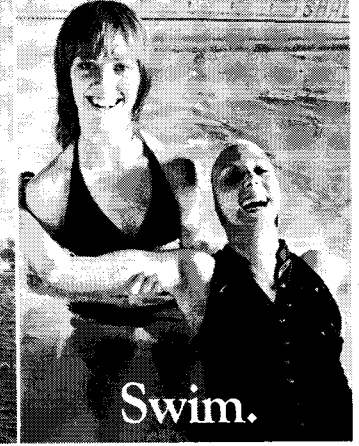
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are concerned about how to reconcile the desire for higher education with the manpower shortage, which already makes it difficult to harvest each year's crops, to run the large dairy, and to provide essential services: kitchen, laundry, children's houses, elementary school, and the high school, which also serves neighboring kibbutzim.

As a compromise, the kibbutz has decided that a maximum of eighteen people will be sent to study this year. But now the headmaster of the kibbutz high school reports that Yosef Morton, one of his teachers who is away studying, can obtain his teacher's certificate and his bachelor's degree if he stays away another year. So the issue is whether to add a nineteenth to the quota or remove from the list one of the young people already approved for study in the coming year.

The debate drags on, through procedural tangles and emotional speeches, until nearly 11:00 P.M. Finally the chairman demands a vote, and, by show of hands, the members vote thirty-one to seven to allow Yosef Morton to study for another year, meaning that nineteen young people of the kibbutz will be away instead of the agreed-upon eighteen.

The final matter to be settled is also a difficult one. Because of the manpower shortage, the work committee has proposed that supervision in the children's houses should end at 4:00 P.M. each day instead of at 5:00. This would mean that parents would have to assume responsibility for their youngsters an hour earlier, often at the moment when the day's work shift ends. Do kibbutz members really favor that radical proposal? The members argue without result, and then, by unspoken consent, the decision is put off until the following week. Those who skip the next episode of *Ironside* will decide.

—ISRAEL SHENKER

REPORTS & COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

Ross Terrill, a contributing editor of *The Atlantic*, is the author of *800,000,000: The Real China*, portions of which appeared in this magazine.

Israel Shenker, a reporter for the *New York Times*, has traveled recently to Israel.



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Innocent Bystander

Made by Hand
by L. E. Sissman

I might as well admit it, after forty-five years of grudging silence: my parents gave me something I value very much. What they gave me—more or less inadvertently, I think—was a sense of awe for the productions of the human hand.

It happened like this: back in the thirties, when lack of affluence made most luxury goods a drug upon the market, my parents conceived a passion for antiques. Not the fancy Parke-Bernet kind, for the most part, but the run of the small, starveling antique shops in the Midwestern towns of those days—rudely handsome country furniture, much of it migrated in wagon beds from New England, nineteenth-century glass, both blown and pressed, and an occasional odd lot from overseas.

Thus I found myself, on almost every weekend from the age of ten or so, dawdling impatiently in dusty shops in places like Tiffin, Ohio, and Niles, Michigan, while my parents dickered over a lusterware pitcher or a bird's-eye-maple side chair. I hated it, let me assure you. The awful, musty smells of age and decay, the ever-present dust, the crabbed witches and warlocks who ran the shops all repelled me. Yet, apparently, I was learning something. Like my parents, who were tyros themselves at the beginning, I began to develop an eye for the right and satisfying form of those few items that, under the dust, were genuinely well-wrought. Back at home on weekdays I was having a similar experience: passing the drawing boards where the men in my father's art studio sat, I began to sense a magical connection between the smell of paint and the

letters and designs taking shape on the blank sheets of Bristol board. At some point I must have stopped and watched those hands creating form with pencil, pen, brush, crayon, airbrush; soon I became an inveterate watcher of single-minded, single-handed work taking place.

These early impressions went underground in my mind, only to surface many years later when I had a house of my own. After a brief flurry of satisfaction with modern furniture—its functionality seemed a sterile living companion after a while—my wife and I found ourselves turning to country antiques, about all we could afford at the time. And suddenly, standing in a shabby antique shop haggling over a blanket chest or a Biedermeier secretary, I had come full circle. This time, though, driven from the present into the past by the congeries of gumwood junk assembled in the model rooms of furniture stores, I was more grateful for the alternative of the past. Slowly, over a period of a dozen years before even the humblest antiques became as prohibitive as they are today, we managed to furnish our house with an eclectic but livable combination of the old and new.

Of which I am glad, because each time I see one of these pieces anew, the justice and economy of its lines please me—and remind me of the single hand and eye that did the work. No amount of automation, it seems, can produce the satisfying forms that one trained man can execute alone; there is something in the committee nature of large-scale manufacturing that frequently fudges, softens, and spoils even the best-conceived line. But the carpenter or cabinetmaker, working alone and with only a book of classical models to guide him, could (and still can, I'm sure) create elegance.

I think this is possible because craftsmanship partakes of the nature of art in that a trained intelligence (even if self-trained) is set against a difficult task that he can master—or even overmaster, in the sense of going beyond the model and creating a new and successful variant. It is in the risk and tension of the *attempt* that the fine cabinetmaker, like the writer or painter, can prove and vindicate himself and his craft. This possibility is not open to a collaborator,

especially not to the myriad collaborators of a mass-production plant, unless each one is a craftsman who makes an unmistakable personal contribution.

I think of the antique house I lived in some years ago; when I owned it, I made something of a study of antique houses. Most of them—those that hadn't been hacked around too much by later generations—had fine proportions and pure roof lines that somehow seem impossible today. Those old house carpenters had no more than an inbred sense of proportion to go by, in most cases, yet their houses invariably looked right. The builder of my present house—a colonial reproduction—though he had a fine eye and studied antique houses himself, couldn't quite get the textures and masses right; the house looks less than old to a trained eye.

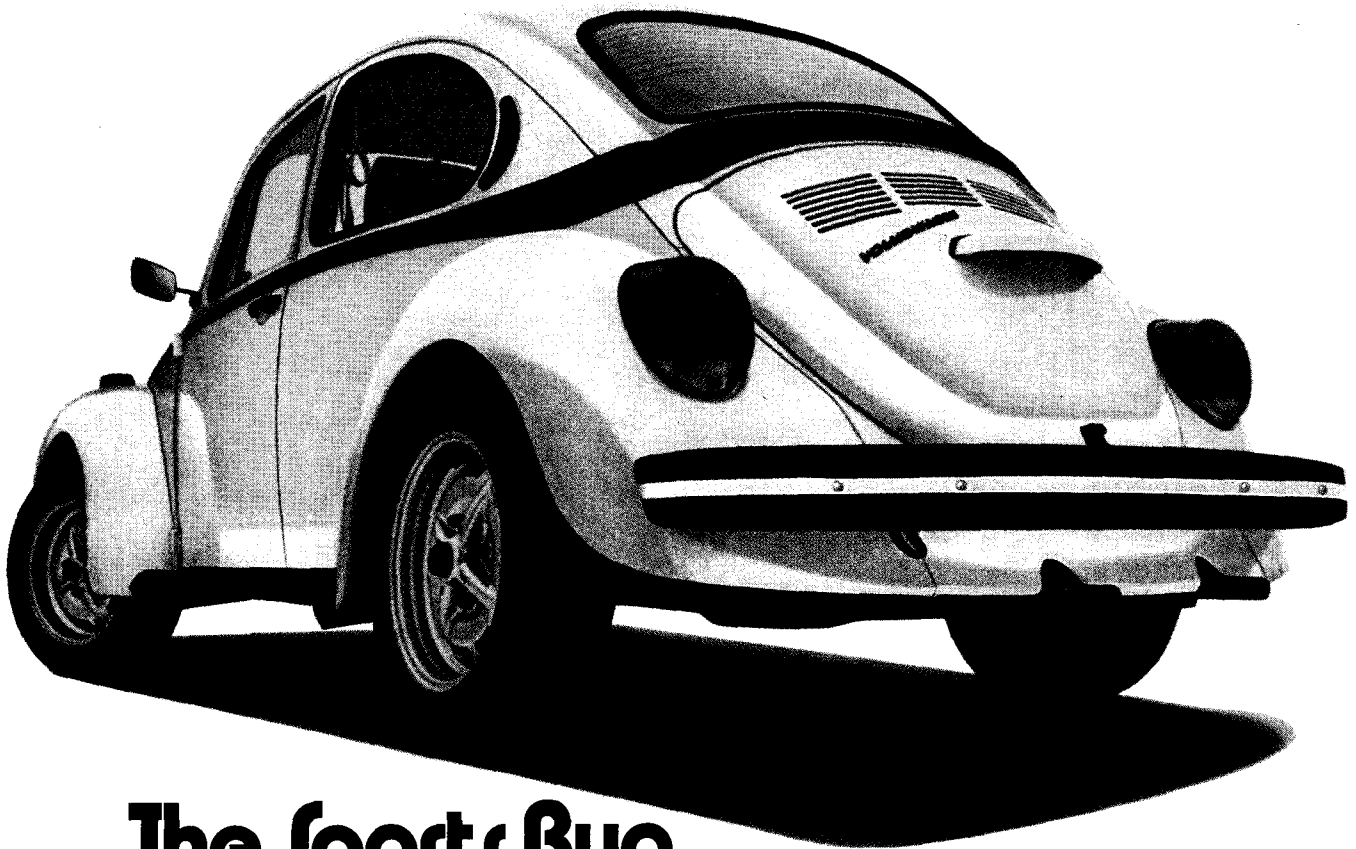
Ruminating on that, I remember it's time to wind the clock in the living room. It's what's called a lyre clock, made probably around 1820 by a follower of the Willards, the family that designed the banjo clock. This one replaces the harsh brass of the banjo with curves of dark-marbled mahogany; on its glass neck, a primitive artist—perhaps the clockmaker himself—has painted the Indian and seal of the Massachusetts coat of arms. The Indian is too short-legged, but he is not ludicrous, any more than the rendering of the Boston Massacre on the glass lozenge below is ludicrous for its drawing errors. This clock is the proud and successful work of one man or a handful, working together, and its integrity, in both senses, daunts and charms me a hundred and fifty years later.

It is the presence of a personal signature, almost as definitive as the signature on a painting, that is implicit in all fine handwork. When a man works so well at his mystery that he can make each piece somehow distinct from all the others in the world, that is craft—and, just as surely, that is art.

Because of the present organization of our economy, it's getting increasingly difficult for us to surround ourselves with such examples of art. And because of the astound-

L. E. Sissman's most recent book of poetry is *Pursuit of Honor*.

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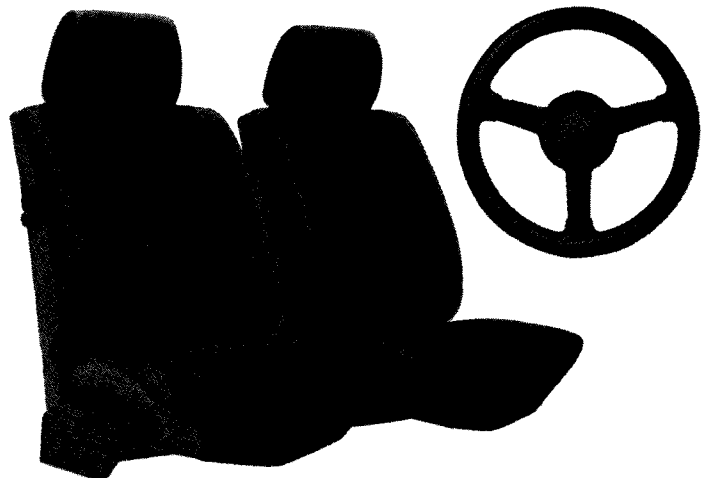
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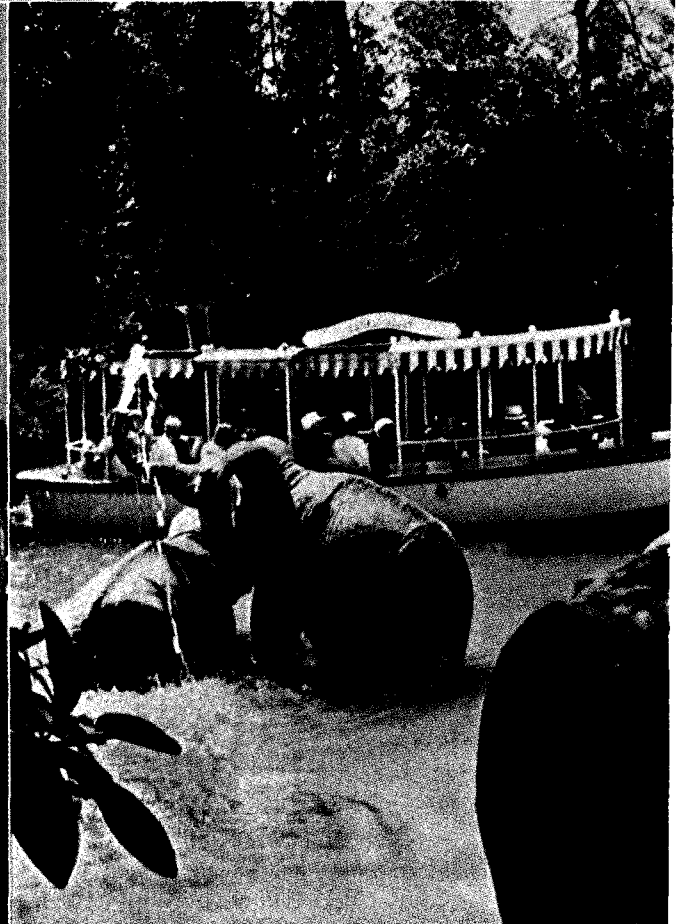
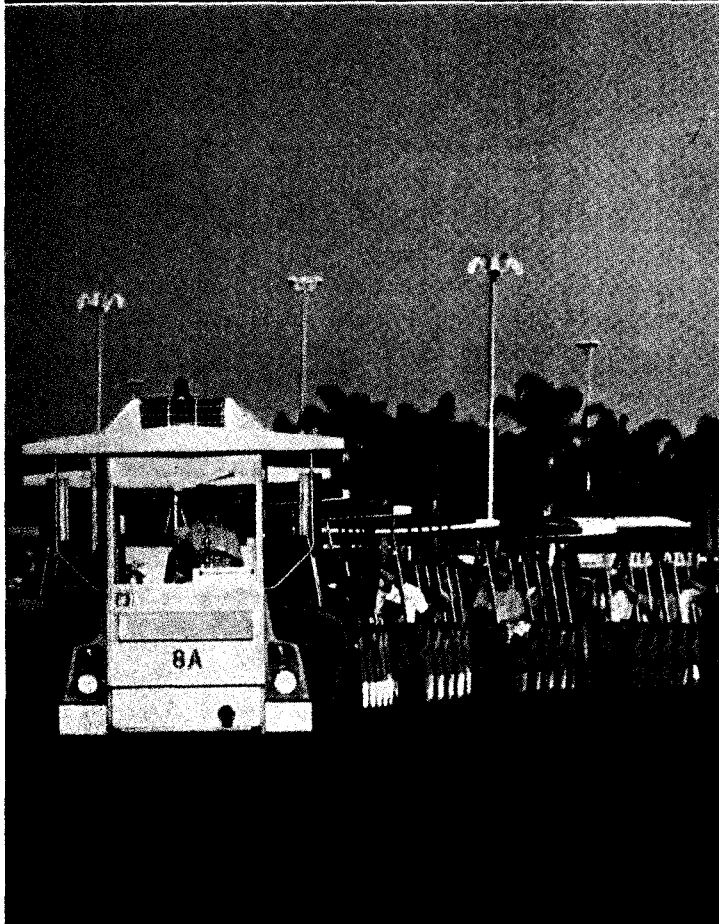
After all, we can't make too much of a
good thing.



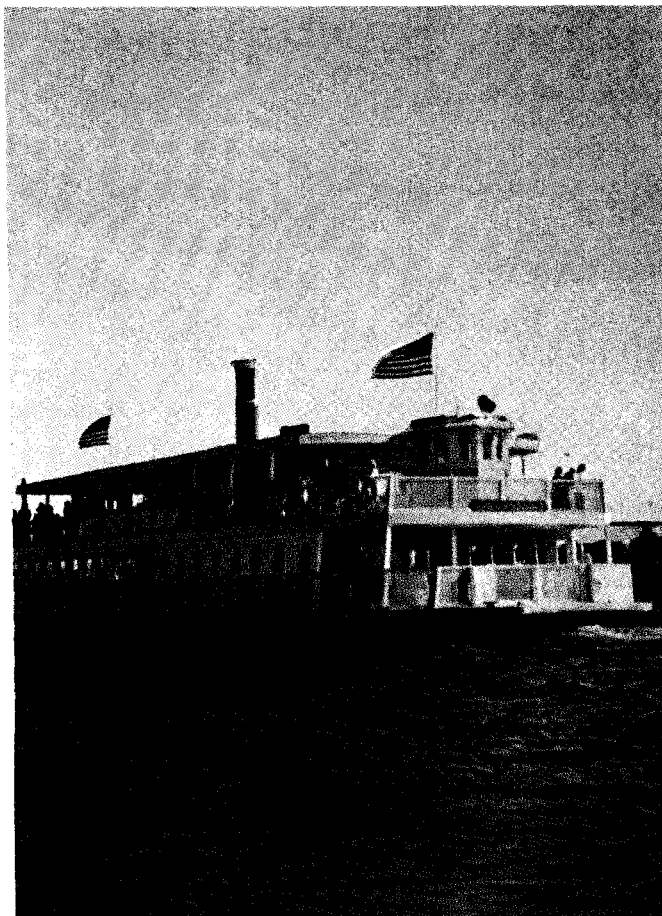
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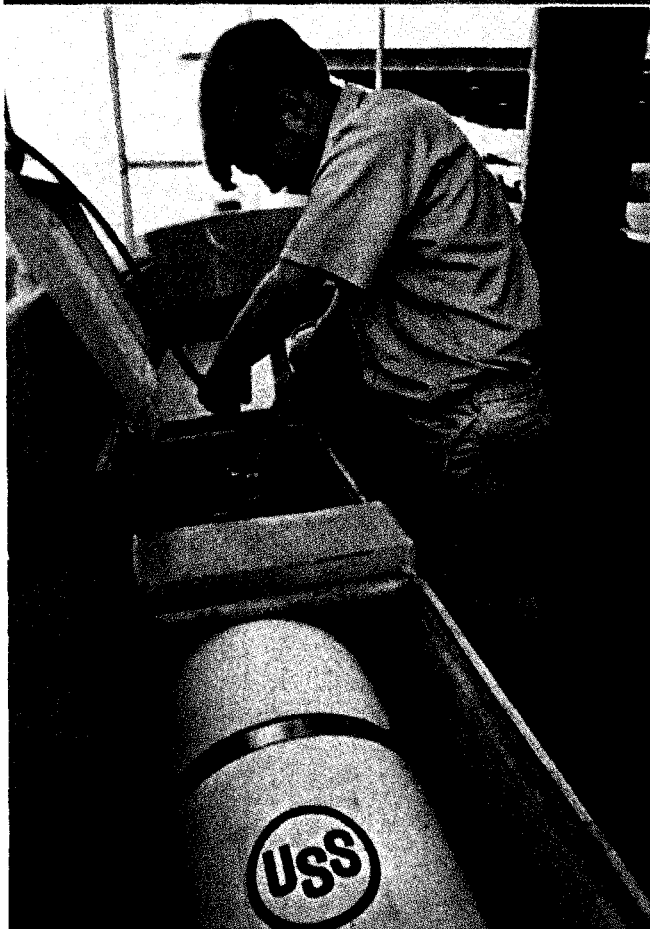
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Or do you?

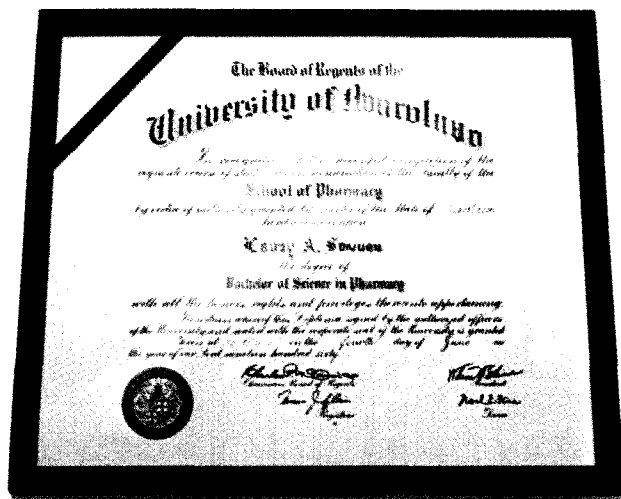
He is a *registered* pharmacist.
That means he (or she, because

professional consultant—a
valuable link between you
and your doctor.

Oh yes, it is very human to
grumble that the medicine
he dispenses seems to cost too
much. But if we really check
it out we discover today's
prescription costs two
percent less than the same
amount cost a decade ago.

So, try thinking about the
value of the service your
pharmacist performs.

Then stop by and thank
him, or her, for a job well done.



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students are women) holds an
academic degree which, these
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sciences, plus the detailed records
he keeps of your prescriptions,
equip him to assist your doctor
by dispensing the precise
medication that's right for you.

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BYSTANDER

ing demand for art our present affluence has created, few of us can afford these artifacts, even the most modest. Instead we must settle for a few treasures, if we're lucky, and furnish the rest of our lives with makeshift, mass-made artifacts.

But wait. It's not that simple. I used to think that my parents' old dictum (another hand-me-down) about buying the best because it lasts longer was a dead letter today. I was surprised to find that it still soldiers on in some categories one would have thought abandoned to mass production. Six years ago, I bought an expensive (but not custom-made) pair of English shoes; I'm wearing them, still sound and shiny, now. This typewriter is a Hermes portable, bought ten years ago; it still works as well as ever after zero maintenance, as do my Nikon cameras and lenses. And last year, in the hope of owning just one more fine car before the NHTSA deluge of pollution and safety regulations, I traded my very capable Japanese sports car for a Porsche 911. A remarkable difference: the Porsche is meticulously built and assembled, like fine cabinetry, and handles like an extension of the driver's will. Here's another semi-mass-produced product that justifies its cost by bearing the invisible signatures of many nameless craftsmen. All of these items are foreign-made—which, sadly, is significant.

But these few pet machines are exceptions. Must we, by and large, be damned to live out our lives in a world of tasteless, odorless, colorless, inhuman plenty? I think the answer is no, but it will take a lot of time and many changes before we return to some uniform standard of craftsmanship. First—short-range—we must rethink the peculiarly American assumption that manual work is dirty work and apply our new thoughts to the manufacturing plants we have now. We've heard already of the experiments at Saab and Volvo, where bolt-tighteners have been replaced by small teams who follow a single component through to its completion. Recently, I read an article by David Jenkins in *The Atlantic* which mentioned a Gaines dog-food plant in Topeka

where the small staff of the automated production line has been revived by retraining. Now any employee can do any job in the plant. Turnover and absenteeism have dropped remarkably. And if this idea of individual competence and responsibility and pride in the finished product can be applied to dog food, it must be equally applicable to all kinds of mass-made goods.

Longer-range, though, I think we must tackle that unfortunate American assumption another way. We must stop our schools from mindlessly training minds and ignoring hands. We must make it equally reputable for a boy or girl to practice carpentry or law. We must start early to teach children the creative joy of working with their hands guided by their minds and not with minds alone. And we must have vocational schools that are not simply second-class alternatives for college-course rejects but places to learn love for craftsmanship. And excellence in it.

This does not mean that I posit a nation of pot-makers squatting at their wheels. The Topeka experi-

ment seems to show that a man or woman can be happy making dog food, as long as his personal contribution is solicited and recognized. Why can't we train a new generation of plumbers, mechanics, and repairmen who take pride in their work and do it well? A few years ago, I would have had enough confidence in this country and its sense of priorities to say that it could be done, and in less than a generation at that. Now I'm not so sure.

But consider our present pass. People who hate their work (because their work is dull and mechanical and they've been educated to despise manual labor) make things that don't work for people who hate their work (because they've been educated for brainwork only and find themselves locked in a competitive rat race with their peers and debarred from the handwork they might have been most successful at). And let's not even talk about getting things that don't work fixed.

America, there's got to be a better way. Can we return to the sound of one hand working?

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THE MAIL

THE LOUD MAJORITY

SIR: This is written in answer to your question in the April *Atlantic* editorial: "What does the silent majority have to say about that?"

As one of that majority who comes in daily contact with many others of the majority who agree, if it requires jail to clean up the news media, we are all for it. The First Amendment has just about been worn thin in the courts.

For too long we have listened to opinions and suppositions instead of news. The clairvoyants of the media are working overtime in reading the President's mind and furnishing their own versions of material for the analysts who pop on after one of his national addresses with a rebuttal, using the same old guff with which their files surely must be bulging.

As for the "Confidential" sources, many of us discount 90 percent of it, and put it down as the work of snoop reporters, a combination of Mrs. O'Grady's back fence gossip and pure concoction.

The entire population of this country is not concentrated in Massachusetts, Washington, D.C., or along the Northeast Coast. I suggest you get around a little oftener. You will be surprised to find there are educated and thinking people in other parts of the United States.

MRS. L. P. TOWNLEY
Kansas City, Mo.

SIR: With regard to the last paragraph of the article by David Wise, "The President and the Press," in your April issue, and Walter Cronkite's statement that he does not regret the use of the word "con-

spiracy": In the New York *Times*, Monday, March 12, a verbatim account of a round-table discussion by four leading broadcasters, including Walter Cronkite, includes the following: "Cronkite: I go along with that, too. I also don't use the word 'conspiracy.' I used it once and I'm sorry I did."

Which Cronkite do you believe?

PENFIELD C. MEAD
Stamford, Conn.

[Notes Mr. Cronkite: "I realized later that this word 'conspiracy' has so often been invoked by the witch-hunters of both right and left that it has lost its true meaning; but I don't back down from my belief that attacks on the press have been organized behind closed doors in Washington—the real meaning, I think, of 'conspiracy.'"]

THE EDITOR]

SIR: Do you want to know what I thought of your editorial in the April *Atlantic*? I was amused. Not that the questions raised aren't serious—they are—but it gives me considerable pleasure to see the liberal press squirm under attack.

Your argument that President Nixon is provoking reprisals against journalists because your opinions offend him is not believable. Why? Because you have not been fair. You haven't been able to hide the fact that you hate his guts.

I do not believe in a controlled press nor do I think does any true American. But I happen to believe that we are struggling out from under a long domination of the communications media. Much of the action you lament is, in my opinion, a healthy sign for the future. The lib-

eral press has enjoyed a monopoly far too long and I hope the pressure from high sources continues until we have a balance of opinion to read and hear, until we have a welcome change.

MRS. H. WESLEY ALTMAN, JR.
Uniontown, Pa.

SIR: Concerning "The President and the Press" by David Wise, I recall an outstanding scene in the film *Wilson* produced during World War II, in which President Woodrow Wilson reads a long tirade from the press to his family. His wife and daughters are indignant and his wife says, "How dare they write such things about you!"

Looking at them in surprise, "About me?" he asks. "No, this is what they wrote about Abraham Lincoln."

CECILIA FAWN NICHOLS
Twentynine Palms, Calif.

SIR: In Charles Rembar's otherwise incisive article, "The First Amendment on Trial" (April *Atlantic*), he makes an unfortunate attempt to contrast the press relationships of the Nixon Administration with those of Thomas Jefferson. Rembar wrote:

Jefferson complained about the press (and, unlike the present Administration, had good reason to complain). But given the circumstances and the time, his reaction was a mild one; he did not use the powers of his office to try to shape the press, nor did he threaten to.

In truth, Jefferson eloquently defended the press while a member of the minority party, but readily attacked it when he became President. He supported prosecution for seditious libel of Federalist editors

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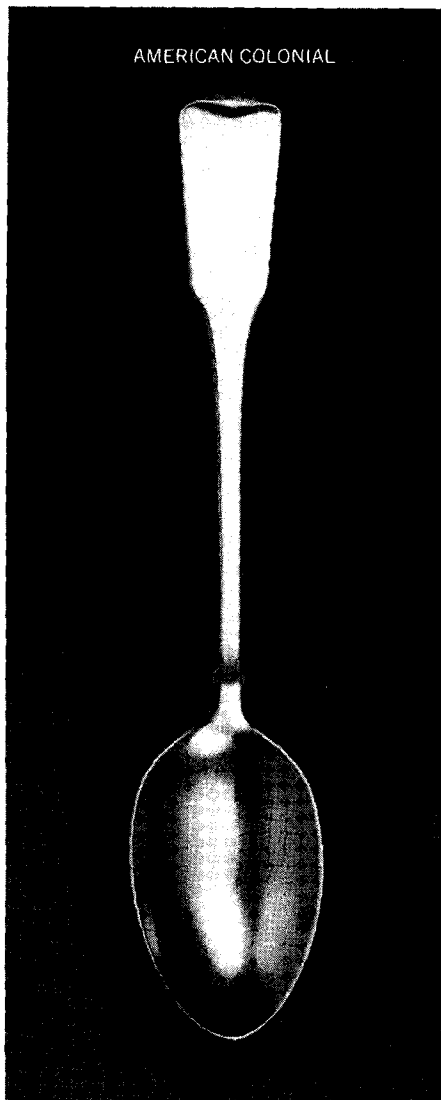
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who attacked him or his government, including: Joseph Dennie, of the Philadelphia *Port Folio*; Harry Crosswell, editor of the *Wasp*; Judge Tapping Reeve, of the Connecticut Superior Court (for articles he had published in the *Litchfield Monitor*); Thomas Collier, publisher of the *Monitor*; Hudson and Goodwin, of the *Connecticut Courant*. Two ministers, Thaddeus Osgood and Azel Backus, were also indicted for seditious libel of Jefferson in sermons.

Shortly before Dennie was indicted in 1803, Jefferson wrote to Pennsylvania Governor Thomas McKean in reply to McKean's query about the use of such trials:

I have therefore long thought that a few prosecutions of the most prominent offenders would have a wholesome effect in restoring the integrity of the presses. Not a general prosecution, for that would look like a persecution; but a selected one. . . . If the same thing be done in some other of the states it will place the whole band more on their guard.

Even granting Mr. Rembar that the libels against Jefferson were vicious, prosecutions for seditious libel are not "mild" reactions. They are the responses of a President who does not really believe in the idea of an independent and vigorous press. One who, like Mr. Nixon, attempts to silence the whole of a press by silencing a part of it.

BILL JOHNSON, JR.
Coon Rapids, Minn.

Charles Rembar replies:

When I wrote the two sentences Mr. Johnson refers to, I was neither accepting the "traditional" view of Jefferson (as Mr. Johnson thinks I was) nor accepting the currently fashionable reaction against that view (as I think Mr. Johnson is). Professor Leonard Levy (not particularly a Jefferson fan) finds no evidence of Jefferson's opinion of the Crosswell prosecution. As to the Connecticut prosecutions (Reeve, Collier, Hudson, Goodwin, Osgood, and Backus), Jefferson said they were begun without his knowledge (and there is no contrary evidence), eventually disapproved them, and used his influence to have some of the charges dismissed. Jefferson's letter to McKean is indeed a lapse from First Amendment virtue, but it

should be noted that the sinner was only agreeing with McKean's urging that state libel prosecutions be commenced; Mr. Johnson gives the impression that Jefferson was bringing the force of the federal government to bear. Meanwhile, before the law had yet got rid of the traditional view that one could be convicted of criminal libel even though he told the truth ("the greater the truth, the greater the libel"), Jefferson was arguing that truth should be a complete defense.

That last is perhaps the key to the difference between Mr. Johnson and me. Jefferson's actions and statements should be seen in the context of his time, and not in the context of our time. For his time, Jefferson's reaction to attacks that Mr. Johnson himself calls "vicious" was mild indeed. Moreover, even on an absolute rather than a relative basis, one would wish that Jefferson's attitude toward free expression, and his responses to critical opposition, were shared by members of the present Administration.

SCHOOL MATTERS

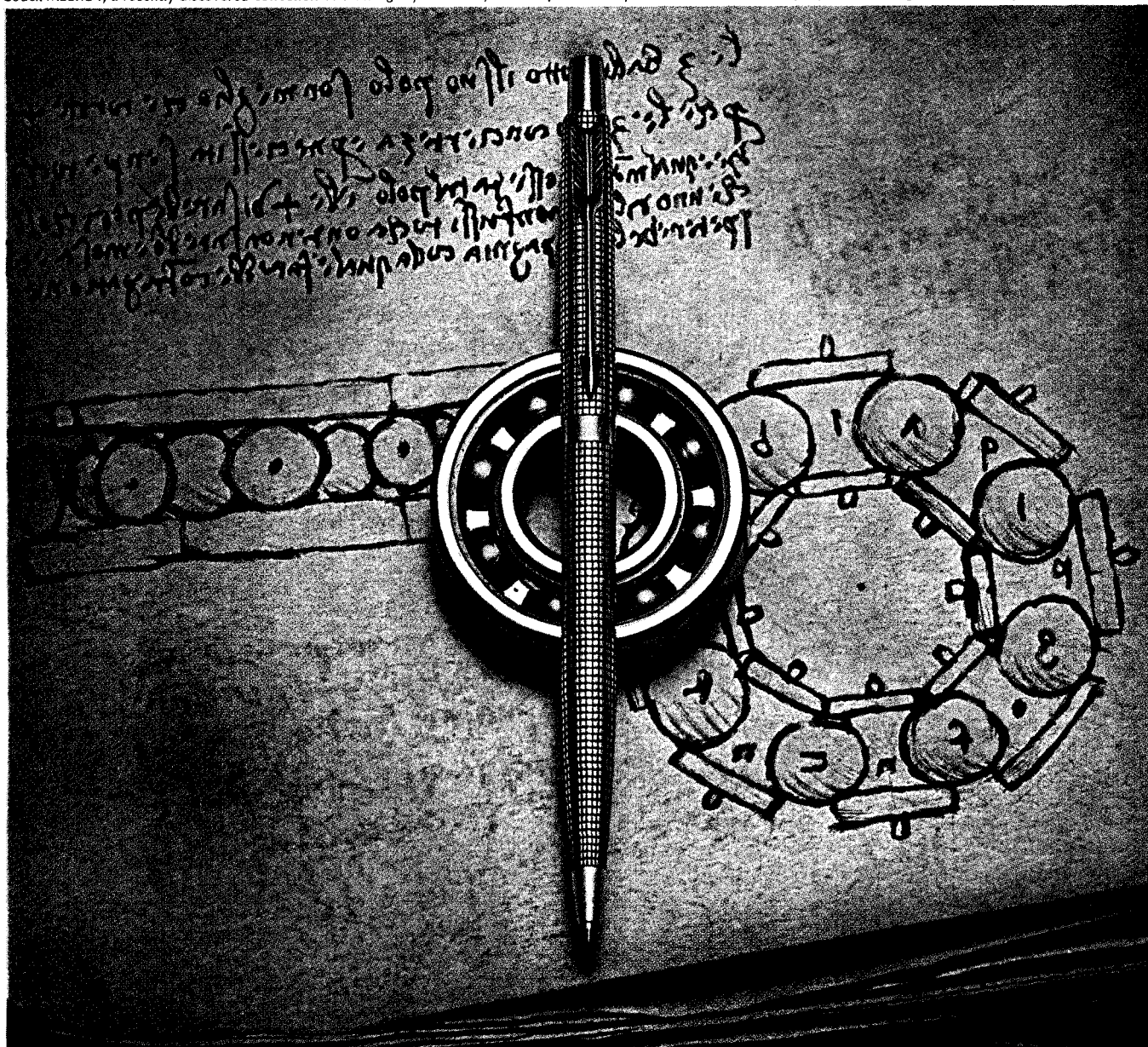
SIR: Re: Godfrey Hodgson's "Do Schools Make a Difference?" (March *Atlantic*). As a high school teacher with thirteen years' experience in segregated schools, schools in the process of desegregation, and integrated schools, I have had an opportunity for observation perhaps denied the denizens of the ivory towers. While some of my conclusions are the same as those reported by the "experts," I have seen much evidence of causal factors apparently overlooked in their search for general answers.

First, the language barrier encountered by most minority children in public schools impedes their ability to absorb formal education. This factor is obvious as it affects Indian, Mexican-American, and Puerto Rican children; but it is almost equally significant in the education of black children. Educators who have recognized this problem are advocating the teaching of standard English as a second language to black children.

Furthermore, children from poor families usually grow up without books or other reading material in their homes. When a child never

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Codex Madrid I, a recently discovered collection of drawings by Leonardo, is to be published by McGraw-Hill Book Company. The drawings below are adapted from that work.



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sees his parents reading, when he lacks the opportunity to learn the curiosity about books and the respect for them instilled in most middle-class children in their early years, it is often too late when he starts to school. In some families children are chided for wasting time or derided as "bookworms" if they take books home to read. Is it surprising that these children do not value books or their contents?

Whether or not intelligence tests are culturally biased is moot. Whether or not they are biased in favor of those who can read is obvious. The questions that should be asked is whether such archaic devices should even be used, since they cannot measure creativity, insight, or sensitivity—the more valuable sorts of intelligence. I might add that some of the most sterile-minded individuals I know score well on the standardized tests that are accorded so much significance by so many sorts of "experts."

Why should the sole criterion of the effectiveness of integration be academic achievement? In thirteen years I have seen mutual suspicion and fear change into mutual understanding and tolerance. Bigotry among young Southerners is not merely no longer fashionable; it is socially unacceptable. That accomplishment alone should settle the question.

If social scientists are to achieve credibility as experts in education, they will have to base their findings on something besides statistics. I might suggest a year or so of teaching in a public school as a start.

EDNA McCA. WATTS
Naples, Fla.

SIR: I found an interesting sentence in "Do Schools Make a Difference?" Godfrey Hodgson says, "The public school systems of New York and other cities with large immigrant populations really did provide a measure of equality of opportunity to the immigrant poor." The research I have done on this topic would indicate that this statement is true. What is *not* true, however, is the implication that the opportunities offered resulted in significant socio-economic improvement for most of the recipients.

Only the Jewish children were able to make use of what the

schools offered them. The Italian children who were their contemporaries did not. Truancy, retardation, and early school-leaving marked the school experience of this group, while the Jewish youngsters were rarely absent, rarely "left-back," and stayed at least to the completion of the eighth grade. There were, of course, significant exceptions to these generalizations in both groups.

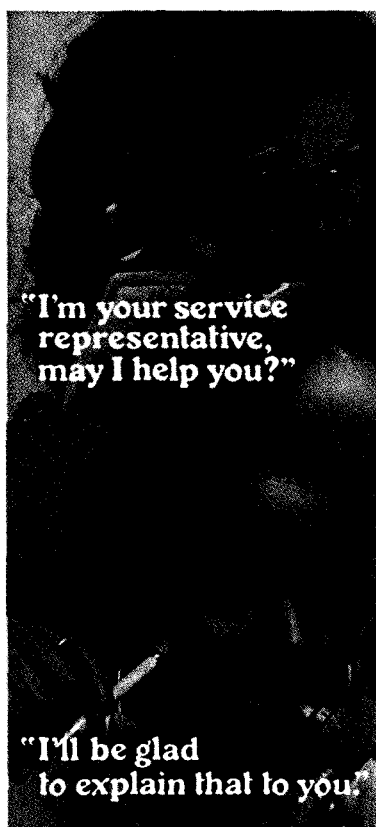
Taken as a whole, however, the school experience of the Italian and Jewish children during the Great Migration would seem to bear out the idea that it was the way in which students *used* the schools and *not* the opportunities offered that made the difference. This historical fact should make us reconsider some of our attitudes toward the efficacy of education alone as a cure for social problems.

SELMA C. BERROL
Associate Professor, Baruch College
City University of New York
New York City

SIR: Although I must confess that I found your article "Do Schools Make a Difference?" by Godfrey Hodgson interesting reading, I don't think it did much to answer the question posed in its title.

None of the three books discussed in the article, and indeed none of the data collected by any of the people mentioned in the article, is capable of answering the question. The reason is quite simple. If you want to discover the *effects* of schooling you must first measure schooling. You do this by observing teachers interacting with their students in classrooms and by gathering information on the effects that different teachers have on their students. Individually and collectively, the writers discussed in your article have not done this.

Researchers who have focused on the teacher rather than the school have shown that teachers clearly *do* make a difference. Some teachers consistently produce greater gains than others on measures of student achievement and/or school motivation. Although the teacher effect is not as strong as the effect of student ability, it is both statistically and practically significant. It appears in all kinds of schools, but it is especially noticeable in schools serving economically disadvantaged popu-



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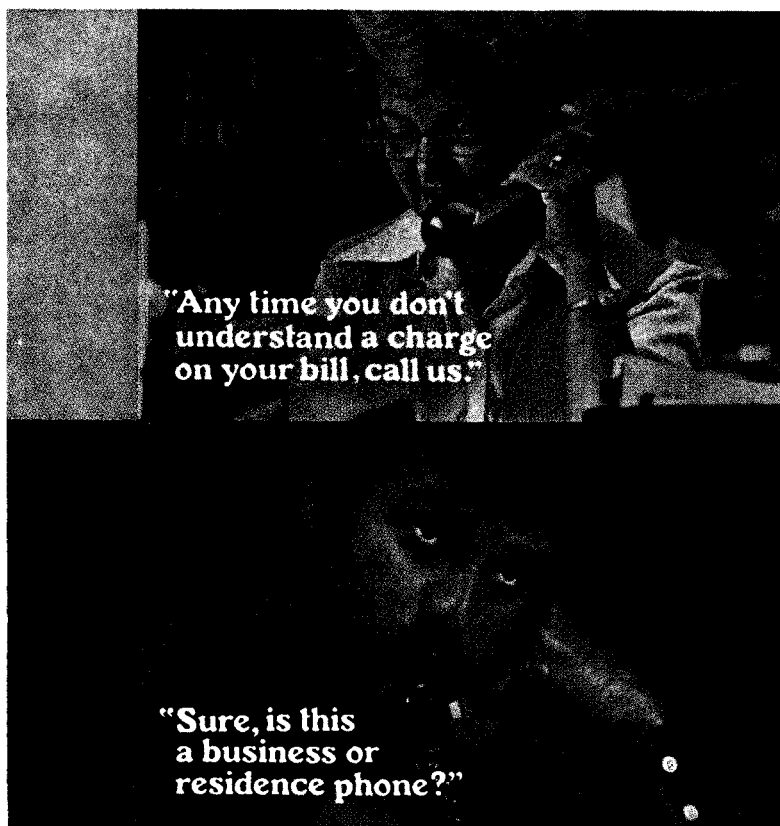
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We hear you.



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**EFFICIENT USE OF ENERGY
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HERE AT HOME.**

In most American cities and towns, the lights went on every evening last winter.

Most homes, most schools, most offices and factories, had enough heat. Most planes and trains had enough fuel.

But not all.

During the winter of 1972-73, many Americans actually experienced shortages of natural gas, certain heating oils, jet fuel, diesel fuel.

What can this country and its citizens do to avoid more widespread shortages, more serious shortages?

What you can do.

All Americans can help stretch our energy supplies by a few simple, thrifty practices:

- Use mass transit if it's available, or travel in car pools.

- Save on gasoline by keeping car engines tuned.
- Turn off lights, radio and television when they're not in use.
- Improve insulation and weather stripping for more efficient heating and cooling at home.
- Try to keep your thermostat setting at 72 degrees. Above that (for heating) or below that (for air conditioning), costs and energy consumption rise significantly.

What we're doing.

The petroleum industry is extending supplies by using energy more efficiently in our own operations.

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With heat exchangers, we're making our energy do more work than ever before.

We're increasing domestic supplies by recovering more oil and natural gas from existing fields and from wells once considered depleted.

This is done by augmenting natural pressures inside the earth: using injected water, gas, chemicals, liquefied gas or heat.

These techniques have the potential to produce as much oil, the second time around, as the field originally produced; in some cases, even more.

Better recovery methods can get a significant portion of the 300 billion barrels of oil in the United States that cannot be extracted with present technology.

New energy sources needed.

But conservation is only part of the answer

The most important part of the solution is to develop energy sources of all kinds in our own country, where they can be depended upon.

Today, 77% of all our energy, including nearly 40% of our electricity, comes from oil and natural gas.

They will be our primary sources of energy for the next critical decade or longer.

Top priority: more oil and gas.

There is a pressing need to increase domestic supplies of oil and natural gas, and to build new refineries, terminals, and other facilities to get products to consumers.

The United States will not "run out" of energy in the near future. Nonetheless, all Americans can help conserve our precious supplies.

Moreover, because of the long lead time required to develop new energy sources, we cannot safely delay action that could increase those supplies.

The need is real, and so is the urgency.

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lations where the students tend to have less ability and thus are more dependent on the teacher for success in mastering the curriculum.

I cannot resist posing a question myself: where do these Harvard professors who blithely announce that schooling doesn't make any difference (or you media people who spread their gospel) send their children to school?

JERE E. BROPHY
Associate Professor of Educational
Psychology
University of Texas
Austin, Tex.

CRITICS AND GWTW

SIR: It's very disappointing to read the comments of the critics on *Gone With the Wind* (March *Atlantic*) and to realize that these persons are considered distinguished critics. Their pieces are intellectually flaccid and obstructively snobbish. We are left with a partial catalogue of strengths and weaknesses but no sense of an intellectual framework within which *GWTW* as a movie and a phenomenon would mean something.

For example, Stanley Kauffmann labels *GWTW* "romantic," which is no more than an irresolute gesture in the direction of explanation. Furthermore, he is too lazy to reconcile his own dislike of the movie with his satisfaction that others like it.

For another example, Andrew Sarris' phrase "moviest of all movies" is empty and does nothing to help us understand *GWTW*. Yet these terms are the only attempts in these five statements to explain the movie; the rest simply pick at it. Judith Crist and Sarris disdain while they approve in such terms as "wallows," "glorious excesses," and "banalities." The terms reflect the provincialism which is all too blatant in Richard Schickel's absurd piece.

Northrop Frye has pointed out that taste commentary is important but can never be the basis of a valid criticism or scholarship. Furthermore, the taste criteria underlying these critics' judgments belong to a subset of culture and cannot be generalized to cover the entire field. The taste and values of these critics are provincial New York literary values.

If we are to understand anything of the meaning of the American experience, we must face its metaphorical forms. As a metaphor, *GWTW* is obviously important. Its people, its story, its setting all speak directly to the American experience. All are idealized; all relate to certain myths. How dense and how typical is Schickel's remark that the portrait of the old South is not historically valid. But the realization of the mythic substratum of the movie is only the beginning of a chain of reasoning that would lead to studies of the audience as well as studies of the movie. Eventually, hypotheses to explain its popularity and its meanings could be put forth. Another chain of reasoning would begin with questions like these: Why did David Selznick devote so much time to the selection of the right Scarlett? What role did the public play in the selection process? Why is the careful matching of role and actress so important? These questions suggest the sort of critical inquiry that will begin to yield the knowledge that *GWTW* has to offer and will lead to hypotheses about the function of the stars.

HERBERT F. OSTRACH
Visiting Lecturer in Film
Boston College
Chestnut Hill, Mass.

SIR: I thoroughly enjoyed Gavin Lambert's fine two-part saga of "The Making of *Gone With the Wind*" (February and March), but I was quite disgusted with the accompanying churlish "comments" by Messrs. Kauffmann, Schlesinger, and Schickel.

To be sufficiently buffoonish to write that *Gone With the Wind* "... seems even worse now than ... in 1939," "... is a bore," and is "chuckle-headed," reveals mentalities that are beyond all second-guessing. It is sufficient to note that the picture has survived in splendid health for nearly thirty-four years, and it will undoubtedly survive yet another thirty-four (and much more) as one of the supreme examples of epic storytelling on film; if those brilliant "critics" are unable to grasp this obvious phenomenon, the American moviegoer surely has experienced no such difficulty!

ROBERT S. LICHTENBERGER
Laurel, Md.

SIR: I couldn't agree more with Andrew Sarris: "Highbrows have never been able to bring themselves to admit that they enjoyed all the wheezing windings of *Wind* except on the most furtive level of flick worship."

W. B. CAMPBELL
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

SIR: The misguided, deluded carplings and foolish prattle of the five critics in regard to *Gone With the Wind* are beyond belief.

JAMES STRONY
Arlington, Mass.

ADVICE AND CONSENT

SIR: Your correspondent Frank Mankiewicz writes (March *Atlantic*, p. 28): "'Victory,' as John F. Kennedy said, 'has a thousand fathers; but defeat is an orphan.'"

Curiously enough, Count Galeazzo Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law, wrote in his diary for September 9, 1942 (*The Ciano Diaries 1939-1943*): "As always, victory finds a hundred fathers but defeat is an orphan."

Although Mr. Mankiewicz gives no date for the Kennedy quotation, I believe that after the Bay of Pigs debacle, he said on April 21, 1961: "There's an old saying that victory has a *hundred* fathers and defeat is an orphan." (Italics added.)

MAURICE B. STRAUSS
Editor, Familiar Medical Quotations
Boston, Mass.

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TITO'S NEW BALANCING ACT

by Claire Sterling

For twenty-five years the President of Yugoslavia has steered an ingenious course, "within the Kremlin's keep but beyond its grasp." Now, at eighty-one, faced with regional quarrels, economic troubles, and the question of who is to succeed him, Tito has cracked down. A report on what he is doing with his right hand, and with his left.

A quarter of a century after Stalin turned him out of the Soviet fold, President Tito of Yugoslavia is saddening many of his Western admirers by what appears to be an autumnal longing to return. Some are sadder than others, depending on which papers they read. But even at best the news is disheartening. It includes: purges through Communist ranks, a muted press, reversion to stifling centralism and economic controls, stern warnings against Western intellectual "poisons" and "the spirit of negating all things Russian," naked ladies vanishing from the news-stands, a martial *Partizanska* look in women's wear (hastily launched after Tito was shocked to learn of a teen-age fad for U.S. Army fatigues), sinister rumblings about "so-called" academic freedom and exhortations to young and old to pull their ideological socks up. Twenty-three varieties of deviationism were listed recently in the Party daily, *Borba*, ranging in semantic drear from anarcho-liberalism, managerism, technocratism, and petty bourgeois consumerism to hegemonism, chauvinism, and national particularism. All this has suddenly afflicted a socialist society so relaxed that

hardly anybody has uttered the words Marxism-Leninism in years. What does it mean, this "lurch toward repression," as the London *Economist* puts it? What else, if not that the father of Titoism, whose adventure in heresy has produced great cracks in the Soviet empire and a singularly happy nation of renegades, is, at eighty-one, renouncing at last?

If so, it is hard to see why. Yugoslavia's Communist leaders are not just the first who challenged Stalin and got out alive. They are the only ones who have managed for twenty-five years to operate an independent Communist state, within the Kremlin's keep but beyond its grasp. As far as doctrine goes, they have taunted Moscow far more cruelly than the Poles, East Germans, Hungarians, and Czechs, who ran straight into the Red Army when they bolted for freedom. If there is a guiding principle at all behind a Communist system which the Yugoslavs have mostly been making up as they go along, it is never to do as the Russians do. Yet such is the magic circle Josip Broz Tito has drawn around his land that the Red Army dare not cross it, at least while he is alive.

If he were to return to Moscow as a penitent, he would be throwing everything away: national sovereignty, political independence, a folk hero's image at home, a lustrous dignity's abroad, and a place of his own in history. Nothing in his life would become him so little as this way of leaving it.

Whatever he does have in mind, it is evidently subtler than the headlines suggest. The United States, which has gambled nearly \$3.7 billion in economic and military aid on Tito's irreversible commitment to a nonalignment policy—"gold in the bank," says an American military expert—doesn't seem too worried. Tito has often trained his hortatory guns on the West, the expert adds, but those of his army keep pointing in the other



President Tito

direction. Backsliders expelled from the Party continue to teach in universities and write for Communist publications. *Peyton Place* goes off the TV screen after three years and one hundred and five installments ("I thought it was a bore. My wife liked it," a Communist official remarks), but *Jesus Christ Superstar* in Serbo-Croat still packs them in. Top party theoreticians urge a return to doctrinal purity on the one hand, yet insist that there is nothing unsocialist about business cycles and bankruptcy laws, or incompatible between Karl Marx and Adam Smith. The Party hierarchy demands greater power while giving away more of the little it has left. "How can I explain what's going on when I don't understand it myself?" said a high Communist functionary I appealed to. How indeed, when a member of the Party's ruling Presidency observes without batting an eye that, "In our country, a liberal is essentially a conservative."

Confusion of this sort is not new to the Yugoslavs, who understandably prefer it to the awful clarity prevailing further east. In their peculiar circumstances there is something to be said for straying from pedestrian rules of logic. Otherwise they would never have stood up to Stalin in 1948, denying him title to territory in effect ceded to him by the Western powers at Yalta, at a time when his Red Army wholly encircled their frontiers and not a soul would have come to their rescue. Conventional logic probably wouldn't have gotten them from there to where they are now, either.

Claire Sterling is a special correspondent for the *Washington Post*, based in Rome.

For twenty years in theory and seven or eight in practice, Yugoslavia has pursued a socialist course as improbable to Western minds as it has been outrageous to the Kremlin. The Communists here are unique in history for having given away the keys to their kingdom. Under a constitution they wrote themselves, their Party does not control the state, nor does the state own the means of production: society does. Even society does not have too much say in the matter. Nearly nine out of ten peasants own their land and do more or less as they please. Four out of five Yugoslavs own their homes, which they are free to sell or leave to their children. About one out of nine in the labor force works privately as an artisan or caterer to the tourist trade. Everything else is owned by society in name, from factories and mines to shipping lines, public utilities, shops, banks, schools, cinemas, and newspapers. But the real power is in the hands of Workers' Councils running each enterprise, accountable only to their members, entitled and indeed constitutionally enjoined to brook no interference from the Communist Party or the state. In fact, true to a communist principle judiciously ignored by Communist regimes the world over, Yugoslavia's state and Party alike were supposed to start withering away as soon as the new system got going, and—this is really what the fuss is about—they very nearly did.

Scarcely able to credit this lunatic experiment, the Russians have necessarily belittled the results. Statistics published by Comecon, Eastern Europe's Common Market, lump Yugoslavia with Albania as the most miserable of socialism's economic flops. Since Yugoslavia happens to be the only state in Eastern Europe which doesn't cook its books, Comecon's figures are hardly worth much. Should its members ask how many of their people would willingly change places with a Yugoslav, they might get closer to the truth.

What troubles Tito at the moment is not so much a consequence of failure as of success. Yugoslavia at the war's end was not only ravaged, broke, and weakened by 1.7 million casualties, but it was one of the most backward and squalid countries in the Balkans. More than half its people were barely out from under five centuries of benighted Turkish rule, and three out of four were land-bound peasants. Now two out of three work in industry and the services, a fair share turning out products good enough for Western markets. In the last fifteen years their real incomes have tripled to \$980 a year, the average in France on the eve of World War II and in Italy barely a decade ago. Some have gotten a lot richer than others, individually and regionally—incomes are four and five times higher in northern Slovenia than in poverty-stricken southern Kosovo—and economists quail at the problems arising from the nation's headlong rush toward affluence. Nevertheless, as Tito's old

friend and enemy Milovan Djilas observes, "Our economy is in chaos but life keeps getting better and better."

It certainly does. My sharpest memory of the Belgrade I'd visited a dozen odd years ago was its joylessness: closed faces hurrying by bunched in clumsy cloth, tatty shopwindows, sour-smelling restaurants, a shabby hotel room and rusty bathtub whose water drained away in an alarming geyser from a hole in the side to another in the floor. The tub has doubtless ended an honorable career as landfill under the steel and glass towers of Novi Beograd and not much else remains of the old gloom. The girls walking down Prince Michael Street in chic pantsuits might be anywhere in Western Europe. Restaurants are comfortable and the service is good. Hotel plumbing works with Teutonic efficiency. An evening's amusement might include a flutter at roulette, blackjack, or chemin de fer at the English Club Casino, and the pole-axing glass of slivovic once thrust upon office callers at eight in the morning has given way to an urbane Scotch (a mere six dollars a bottle, in Yugoslav currency) suitably late in the day. One may still encounter a familiar hunger for Western fashions, but it is no longer so poignant. "What a cut!" sighed the wife of a middle-ranking official I met, as she eyed my Italian coat, adding that she generally goes off to Rome or London once a year to replenish her wardrobe.

Nobody minds if she does. In the early sixties, I

remember paying a few dollars for a rented cottage on the Dalmatian coast to a very respectable lady who thoughtfully tucked the money behind a sliding panel in her upright piano. But any Yugoslav can keep hard currency in a private bank account nowadays; and with wide open frontiers, a population of 20 million spent \$217 million on 11 million trips abroad last year.

The shopping is pretty good at home, too. Apart from utilitarian washing machines, record players, and television sets on gleaming display, there are elegant shoes, Helena Rubinstein cosmetics, Givenchy perfumes, Dior scarves at \$20 apiece, and smart fur coats: a smashing ponyskin number I saw, priced at \$500, would easily hold its own on Rome's Via Condotti.

The ponyskin coat probably isn't going to be sold for a while, since the only Yugoslavs who could get up the money are lying low right now under hot streams of public abuse. These are not really the Party bureaucrats of the New Class that Djilas once wrote about. They are the *bogataši* (rich guys) turned out by a much more dynamic and prosperous society: enterprise managers, technocrats, bankers, lawyers, engineers, and architects moving in circles where money flows freely enough to pick up an extra something to bring total incomes of six or seven thousand dollars a year. They live very well, with two or three cars to a family (usually including a Mercedes), a decent flat in town, a *vikendica* or weekend cottage in the country, and a larger villa or two at the sea, perhaps a speedboat, occasionally a cabin cruiser. (A



couple of years ago, I hired a sleek one in Dubrovnik for a hundred dollars a day from a Belgrade lawyer who might be hard put to tell a tax collector how he paid for it.)

But you don't have to be in the *bogataši* set to own a *vikendica* here. Many of the 42,000 weekend cottages that have gone up in the last five or six years were built by modest families doing most of the work themselves. They are a much better measure of how far this country has come in the last decade, thanks partly to government policy and partly to what Yugoslavs call the art of making out. Here, as elsewhere around the Mediterranean, it is a fine art. While the average Yugoslav worker earns \$100 a month or less, it is surprising how many escape the average somehow. Of Belgrade's 700,000 residents, only 10,000 earn over \$200 a month. Yet 180,000 own cars, the cheapest costing more than an ordinary worker earns in a year.

They manage as might be expected of people halfway over the hump from Eastern socialist austerity to Western consumerism. Husbands and wives both work, leaving grandmothers to mind the children. A good many do some moonlighting at fancy prices—*tezga*, they call it—as masons, carpenters, and dressmakers. A million have gone abroad to get a job for a while, with help from government employment offices, earning three times more in West Germany than at home and sending back close to a billion dollars a year in remittances. And they incur debts.

The joys and sorrows of buying on time, all too familiar under capitalism, are alien to straitlaced socialist societies. Yugoslavia was the first of the latter to give credit a whirl in 1965, when it made its remarkable leap from a sclerotic controlled economy to self-management and a free market. By then, self-managing Workers' Councils had existed on paper for thirteen years without managing much. The Communists had long since changed their once all-powerful Party into a League of Communists confined to the anodyne role of "educator and guide"; and the federal government, symbol of the state, was withering under a new constitution stripping it to a handful of skeletal agencies and the Ministries of Defense, Interior, and Foreign Affairs.

The 1965 reform put an end to active federal participation in economic affairs. Henceforth all large-scale investment would be done only by self-managing banks and enterprises. Workers' Councils in each enterprise were to make up their own minds about expansion, modernization, production, and wages and prices, with very little in the way of ground rules and, apart from suggested guidelines in a national plan, no butting in from the government or Party. Left to the mercies of a market ruled by the laws of supply and demand, those who made a profit could divide it up, and those who didn't could go out of business.

Not if they tried—and they probably did—could Yugoslav leaders have hit on a scheme so little resembling the Soviet model. The effect on their countrymen has been wonderfully exhilarating. It is hard to convey the immense pride Yugoslavs take in their self-management system. The very faults they find in it are proof, to their minds, of its excellence: where else in the world do workers have such boundless freedom to make mistakes?

There is no doubting the freedom, or the mistakes. It isn't every waiter who knows how to run a restaurant, or drill press operator who can grasp the essentials of market research and cost accounting. Many Workers' Councils—80 percent, a recent study shows—have stopped trying to master technical problems, trusting in large part to their managers' judgment. But they have still to be reckoned with as boards of directors, who can always fire a crooked or incompetent manager, and do.

For all the bloopers these councils have inevitably made, self-management has given a buoyant lift to the economy here, unknown in the socialist world and not so easily come by in the capitalist one. Distracted by all the fright stories about Yugoslavia's present plight, hardly anybody appears to have noticed its economic performance last year: in the depths of very real economic troubles, the gross national product nonetheless rose 6 percent, industrial production 8 percent, labor productivity 4 percent, and real wages 3 percent. It is four years or more since neighboring Italy, member of the elite Common Market industrial club, has come near such figures.

Nevertheless, 1972 was undeniably a bad year, mostly because a lengthy national spending spree brought on an appalling hangover. With credit deliberately made easy since 1965 to get the whole self-management system rolling, incurring debts became a national pastime. Private consumers snapped up cars and TV sets on the installment plan, retailers ordered recklessly on the cuff to meet the rush in demand, Workers' Councils bribed, browbeat, and jostled in a race for bank loans to build new plants, install modern machinery, and jack up inventories and turnovers, not to mention wages and prices. Some dreamed up ways of borrowing money that would have stood Friedrich Engels' hair on end: the huge Crvena Zastava (Red Flag) Auto Works, built on Fiat license, actually floated a public bond issue at 10 percent interest, oversubscribed before nervous Communist leaders could put a stop to it. Nobody seemed to worry about how all this money was going to be paid back, while less and less of it actually changed hands.

By 1972 the country was awash in a sea of IOU's. If fewer than one thousand of its fifty-five thousand enterprises were chronically in the red—not bad at all for a socialist state—unpaid enter-

prise debts were running to more than half a billion dollars yearly and even highly profitable factories couldn't lay hands on enough cash to meet their payrolls. The Red Flag plant employed two economists whose sole job was to scrounge around for short-term loans to pay its twenty-six thousand workers every two weeks; a big road-building factory in Titograd went begging for a million dollars it owed in back wages; and hundreds of other factories, including the biggest in the booming television industry, were hit by wildcat strikes when they couldn't find the cash to pay wages for months on end. Meanwhile cost-push inflation was predictably sending prices out of sight, with living costs up nearly 17 percent in 1972. Constitution or no constitution, the Party stepped in.

Obviously somebody had to, and though self-management was bound to be suspended at least in part for a while, most workers seemed resigned to that. Far from suggesting any throwback to depressing Soviet custom, stabilization began as a Zurich gnome or an Arthur Burns might have devised it: a credit squeeze, import and price controls, two devaluations of the dinar, and limits on installment buying and public expenditure. This much alone was enough to get Yugoslavia's balance of payments back into the black (from a deficit of \$340 million to a surplus of \$200 million) and build its hard currency reserves up to \$800 million within a year; a "fantastic" achievement, according to one Western economist here. But the next stage was considerably grimmer.

Effective from the first of this year, investments are allowed only when there is enough cash on the line to cover 20 or 30 percent. Taxes, taxes, and more taxes have been slapped on consumers. Wages have been frozen officially until June of 1973 for a million white collar workers, and effectively for almost everybody else so long as the cash drought lasts. The city of Belgrade announced that its own white collar workers would kick in one month's pay in twelve as a "morally obligatory" loan to help embattled productive enterprises. Under a stiff bankruptcy law, any such enterprise failing to get out of debt within three months must cut wages 12 percent and go into receivership while its creditors decide whether to bail it out or let it go under.

As a technique in instant education, the measures have been amazingly effective. Tottering factories snapped to their feet when Workers' Councils saw the wisdom of selling goods they had been hoarding against the time when prices might go still higher. Creditor enterprises "found" money laid by for a rainy day to help those in their debt, rather than write them off as a dead loss. Sizable chunks of capital were dislodged from huge conglomerates and banks which had preferred to invest it more profitably elsewhere, in the manner of their kind the world over. So far, nothing remotely



At a sidewalk café in Belgrade

like a million workers have taken a wage cut, as many observers had predicted, much less been thrown out on the streets.

At this rate, it should be possible before long for the Workers' Councils, sobered by experience and perhaps shielded from temptation by a few elementary regulations, to start operating normally in a free market again and send the Communist Party back to its knitting. But it looks as if the Party won't go.

From 1965 onward, the League of Communists was as good as its word. Party cells were dismantled in all enterprises, and Party members could speak only as individuals at Workers' Council meetings, when they managed to make themselves heard. Leaders of the once domesticated Sindakat, the trade union federation, would no longer apply Party decisions which the workers did not find "acceptable." Banks and their biggest depositors—multimillion-dollar self-managing conglomerates like General Export and Inex, entangled in everything from big textile factories to 1200-room hotels with heated swimming pools and their own jet airlines for tourists—became colossal "alienated centers of power," independent of and seemingly impermeable to Party influence.

Self-managing university faculties more or less ignored decisions of the League of Communists and wasted little time on passing the League's tedious doctrine on to the young. ("Shamed" to discover that the University of Belgrade offered

only two lessons a week on Marxism, Tito recently exclaimed, "We have driven Marx, Engels, and Lenin out of the schools. Let us bring them back!") Self-managing newspapers grew as mordantly and gaily irreverent as the Czechoslovak ones in Prague in spring of 1968. "I don't even dare ask a Yugoslav reporter to respect a press embargo, maybe just hold up publication of a communiqué for a few hours," somebody in the Information Secretariat confided to me. "If I did, he'd accuse me of censorship and I'd be crucified."

But the most serious development was that the League was spinning off into six or eight little Leagues within the six independent republics and two autonomous provinces. Formed immediately after World War II, these republics were meant to cope with an irreducible ethnic problem. Yugoslavia, as its few detribalized sophisticates will tell you, is not so much a nation as a penance imposed at Versailles for the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo which touched off World War I. Not only does this territory the size of Oregon hold five main and a dozen small nationalities speaking three major languages and using two alphabets, but its largest groups, the eight million Serbs and four million Croats, are divided by blinding religious, historic, cultural, and visceral hatreds going back hundreds of years. The fact that they fought on opposite sides in World War II was more an effect than a cause of the corroding rancor still between them. To this day, the ferocity of the Ustashi in Hitler's puppet Croat state festers in Serbian memory: the murderous gangs roaming from door to Serb door and burning down whole villages, the looting, vandalism, and rape, the torture, butchery, and truckfuls of women's breasts and children's eyes sent floating down the river to Serbian partisans with the compliments of Ustashi leader Anton Pavelić. The repayment of atrocity for atrocity by Serbian Chetniks wherever they got the chance could hardly be forgotten either.

Far from overcoming the problem, ethnic autonomy appears to have made it worse. Repeatedly strengthened at the federal government's expense, the republics have carried exasperated nationalism to the point of having separate railroads, weather stations, and postal services; and in the "feverish scramble for dinars," as Tito put it last autumn, their Communist leaders have been converging on Belgrade not so much to work together as to cut each other's throats.

The poorer republics of Bosnia, Montenegro, and Macedonia have been accusing richer Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia of creaming the country's rising wealth, leaving a wider gap than before. Slovenia, richest by far, has charged that its contribution (1.9 percent of GNP) to a development fund for the poorer republics is being squandered by indigent Kosovo on marble swimming pools. Croatia has claimed that Serbian-dominated conglomerates

like General Export and Belgrade banks have been swallowing too much of its income, especially in foreign currency, which happens to be true. The demand for "clear accounts" (the cry of thousands of rioting students in Zagreb, implying that the Serbs in Belgrade were doing some fancy book-keeping to cover up what was really being drained out of Croatia) was a primary cause of the Croatian mutiny in 1971.

In Croatia, local Party leaders had actually drifted into a tactical alliance with anti-Communist nationalists and an arch-conservative Catholic clergy before Tito finally bore down on them; and everywhere else a central Party leadership seemingly flabby to the core was incapable of imposing discipline on its squabbling offspring. Tito himself complained bitterly that Party forums no longer bothered to mention his speeches, "some saying, 'Let him talk and we'll go our own way.'" The federal government had still less authority, especially in its own Assembly. With six hundred and twenty representatives elected from the republics and their socio-political-economic sectors, the Assembly serving as Yugoslavia's national parliament voted down the federal government's proposed *voluntary* economic plan thirteen times in 1966. Last year it refused flatly to approve the federal budget.

In a word, the Communist Party was at bay. Its executive secretary, Stane Dolanc, openly said as much not long ago when he reminded his colleagues that "we communists are still in power in this country. . . . This, comrades, must be openly stated, for there was a time when it was shameful to admit it." Bosko Šiljegović of the League's twenty-two-man collective Presidency put it to me more simply still. "We were going to extremes, the whole thing was getting absurd; it was high time to call it a day."

Many Yugoslavs were not sure at first whether Tito had the state of the economy or of his Party uppermost in mind when, in October, 1972, he published what is spoken of in subdued tones here as The Letter. Yugoslavs' concern about The Letter was justified, because, as these last months have shown, the economy can probably be put right without too much anguish, but the Party cannot.

Reportedly, Tito began to prepare carefully in 1970, above all making sure of his army's unre-served support, before giving the ship of state's wheel a brisk yank. He appears to have been hurt by his countrymen's stunned reaction to The Letter. "I found it particularly hard to bear when people began to allege that I was one of those who wanted to revert to the old ways," he said afterward. But just what he did want is still far from clear.

The burden of The Letter was that the League of Communists must embark on an "ideological and political offensive" to become its old self again, returning to the tenets of "democratic cen-

tralism” and regaining mastery enough to enforce its own decisions. Not only must it bring about a “radical change in behavior” to make economic stabilization work, but it would have to move in on the self-management system permanently, taking a firm hand in “personnel policy”—the hiring and firing of managers, that is—so as to save the Workers’ Councils from a new “privatized” managerial class and, presumably, themselves. The rich would have to be soaked, and errant intellectuals brought back to the straight and narrow, especially in the woefully derelict information media; Tito called for “putting an end to destructive writings, and removing from leading positions all those who do not accept the League’s political course.”

Had this been anybody but Tito speaking, most Yugoslavs would have thought they were done for. As it is, they are not so sure. To all appearances, he has demanded a return to the Dark Ages of twenty years ago, with its bleak command economy and a dogmatic, oppressive Communist Party pushing everybody around. But what has happened since *The Letter* hardly suggests such a purposeful backward journey. Though he has bluntly warned that anybody who “opposes the show-down” will have to go, the Party’s own estimates of expulsions to come from its ranks have been scaled down to ten thousand, only a fraction of which have materialized so far. No other republic has gone through a purge like Croatia’s in 1971, when the very whiff of insurrection and/or secession brought on scores of arrests and a political housecleaning from top to bottom (though not before Tito ordered a confidential public opinion poll to help him determine how far he could safely go).

All the republics have been hit, of course, mighty Serbia hardest. The entire country was shaken by the resignation of Marko Nikesić, a clever and politically supple leader of the Serbian Party, especially when he was followed out by pillars of the regime like Koča Popović, a member of the League’s collective Presidency, and Foreign Minister Mirko Tepavac. Yet resignations on that level scarcely add up to a few dozen. Brilliantly saucy editors have been kicked upstairs, or down, but rarely out in the cold. Destructive articles have indeed been banned from time to time on court order, but many Yugoslavs still write tartly at home, and some with freezing disapproval in foreign papers like the *New York Times* and *Corriere della Sera*.

Distinguished university professors have been ordered by the Party to resign, but their faculties won’t let them. TV viewers have been sorely tried by reruns of wartime partisan documentaries in which delirious mobs chant “Ti-to, Ti-to, Ti-to”—something “they would never have done to us before *The Letter*,” one viewer assured me. Yet fears of a Russian culture bath far worse than such mild mental torture have gradually subsided, as self-



An open-air market in Zagreb

managing movie houses complain of the box-office losses when they show a Russian film. Even the reviled new managerial class isn’t really taking much punishment. Useful though it is to abuse them in public, competent managers are plainly indispensable to a self-managing system, which Tito and his whole Party are sworn to preserve and, if anything, strengthen. He has seen to it discreetly, therefore, that the Party should not be too hard on them.

Some passports have been picked up, inevitably including that of Milovan Djilas. Yet he is the first to point out that nobody opens his mail or taps his telephone. For all the lapses there have always been here (past prison sentences for writers like Djilas and Mihajlo Mihajlov are examples), socialist legality is holding up pretty well. Certainly, there is no talk of recalling the detested Alexander Ranković, former chief of the now liquidated secret police and Yugoslavia’s closest thing to a Stalinist. If it is true that “in every Communist, a little Stalinist is hidden,” as a Yugoslav reporter acidly remarks, that is hardly the word for the good gray men summoned now to high Party positions. They are merely less imaginative and more dutiful Communists than their predecessors.

Evidently these are the kind Tito thinks he needs to prepare for the succession, rather late in his day. He may be strong as an ox, but he often points out that he is unlikely to be around much

longer; and to leave with his Party in its present deplorable state might ruin the work of a lifetime. "What have I been doing with you all these years, if everything falls apart after the departure of one man?" he asked his compatriots not long ago. Alas, it was a good question.

As his close associates tell it, Tito is trying to reconstruct a Communist Party strong enough to resist just such a reversion to Stalinism as might tempt a weaker one once he is gone: a Party with enough clout to force a working truce on the warring republics, restore the country's waning sense of social equity, enlarge the powers of the Workers' Councils and offer tactful guidance in their use, and provide just the right amount of national direction to keep the economy from going off the rails. But it must know where to stop: no return to "bureaucratic étatism" and top-heavy planning, no killing of initiative in or out of the Workers' Councils, assuredly no relapse into a police state. In other words—the phrase is the Yugoslavs', not mine—he wants a recentralized Party in a decentralized state.

Since not even Tito has managed to strike such an exquisite balance in twenty years, it seems a tall order for his subalterns, not all of whose designs are quite so chaste. Considering how many are old-time Bolsheviks schooled in the iron Comintern tradition, it is hardly surprising that some should look back in regret occasionally to the days when the Party line was more primitive but less taxing. If none might care to go all the way back, knowing the failures of the past as they do, they would plainly welcome more leeway than Tito is giving them to reassert the Party's authority. While keeping the structure of self-management for form's sake—there would be hell to pay if they didn't—they would like to have the country unmistakably run from Belgrade, the directives issued from the top and enforced below by a reanimated network of Party cells in every enterprise. Outwardly intact, self-management would then be inwardly bent to the Communists' will. A girl in that condition might be described as slightly pregnant.

By and large, these are the thoughts not of wicked but of worried men. Except for the army—an interesting exception—Tito is the country's only all-Yugoslav institution. Without him it is not inconceivable that Yugoslavia might literally be torn limb from limb. There are a lot of Albanians in Kosovo, just across Enver Hoxha's border, and autochthonic Greeks in Macedonia, right under the Colonels' noses. Wealthy Slovenia, thoroughly at home in Western Europe, might well drift off into an association, say, with Austria, its former imperial ruler. And the Russians have always taken a consuming interest in the Serbs and Croats.

How sinister the interest may be is a matter of

endless argument here. Some say the Soviet Union is ready to pounce upon and dismember Yugoslavia as soon as Tito is gone, if not sooner. During Brezhnev's visit in 1971, he was rumored to have warned Tito that the Red Army would move in to take care of the mutinous Croats if Tito didn't. Inasmuch as it was Tito he was supposedly talking to, that sounds like a tall story. But nobody would put it past the Russians to do something else that rumor had them doing at the time: secretly egging the Croat rebels on.

There is not much doubt here that Soviet agents are doing their best to keep Croats and Serbs in eternal ferment, which doesn't take much doing. But it is a big jump from this sort of political nagging to outright military action. Many Yugoslavs argue that since Russia did not invade in 1948, it never will. Having pinned down twenty German divisions throughout World War II, the partisans were a formidable fighting force even then. The force is much more impressive now. Since the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, Yugoslavia's powerful standing army has been flanked by a people's militia armed to the teeth and organized down to the smallest hamlet. On permanent call for a system of total defense, the militiamen ask only that the army hold the Ljubljana Gap for three days, until they are in fighting position to hold the mountains behind it. How hard they would fight is hardly open to question: Yugoslavia is the only state on earth whose constitution makes no provision for signing an agreement of surrender.

This defense system and the determination behind it are the gold in the bank that American strategists count on. Safe as Fort Knox while Tito lasts, it might be safe forever if Yugoslav sovereignty in the fullest sense depended on sentiment alone. Any casual visitor can see that the Yugoslavs love independence and don't love the Russians. What worries them most, however, is not the danger of military defeat but political default. When Tito leaves, a collective leadership of twenty-three men in the Party's Presidency is supposed to replace him. Though competent enough, there are no forceful or gifted leaders among them. Left to themselves, they might never have invented self-management, or all the other intricate elements of an experiment in libertarian communism which, as one or two confessed to me, they are still not sure they understand. One does not readily see them effecting a smooth transition when Tito goes, in a country with the monumental problems of this one. The more frustrating their failure to cope, the closer they might come in spirit to the drab communist orthodoxy cast aside when they were much, much younger. When and if that happens, the Kremlin would no longer need to send an army in to take care of the Yugoslav renegades. You don't have to be a horse to win a horse race, as a fellow named Marx (Groucho) once pointed out. □

WALKER CREEK: NOVEMBER

by Peter Davison

Now swift swallows have flown for the winter.
The last pears have fallen.
Maples, huddled close in the swamp,
slip off their leaves
and lay bare the shaggy cliffwall.
Twigs in damp tangles under
the sagging grasses
abandon themselves to rot,
food for beetles.
Hardest of their generation, the wry apples
clutch at their gnarled twigs
as long as the wind will let them.

The sumac's crimson seedpods cringe
while the air unleashes the first
fast rangers of milkweed.
Under the deep beeches
in leafmold crevices
autumn phalluses
rise up in a single night from
forgotten woodpiles.
The screech of a bluejay batters
naked oak trunks, scattering
bleached goldfinches
wherever they cluster on thistles.
The junco's tail flashes
in the cedar. He sings
of two pebbles chipping against one another.

Toppling grasses and unsteady leaves
tolerate the chickadee's scramble
through the drowsy apertures of autumn
toward the house
whose chimney sighs gray woodsmoke
and panes of glass smile earlier each evening.
Roots hunch and contract, their blood runs thin.
They hold forearms
stiff against the wind, while
castaway stones
plunge fistlike for winter
into the ground's graveled belly.

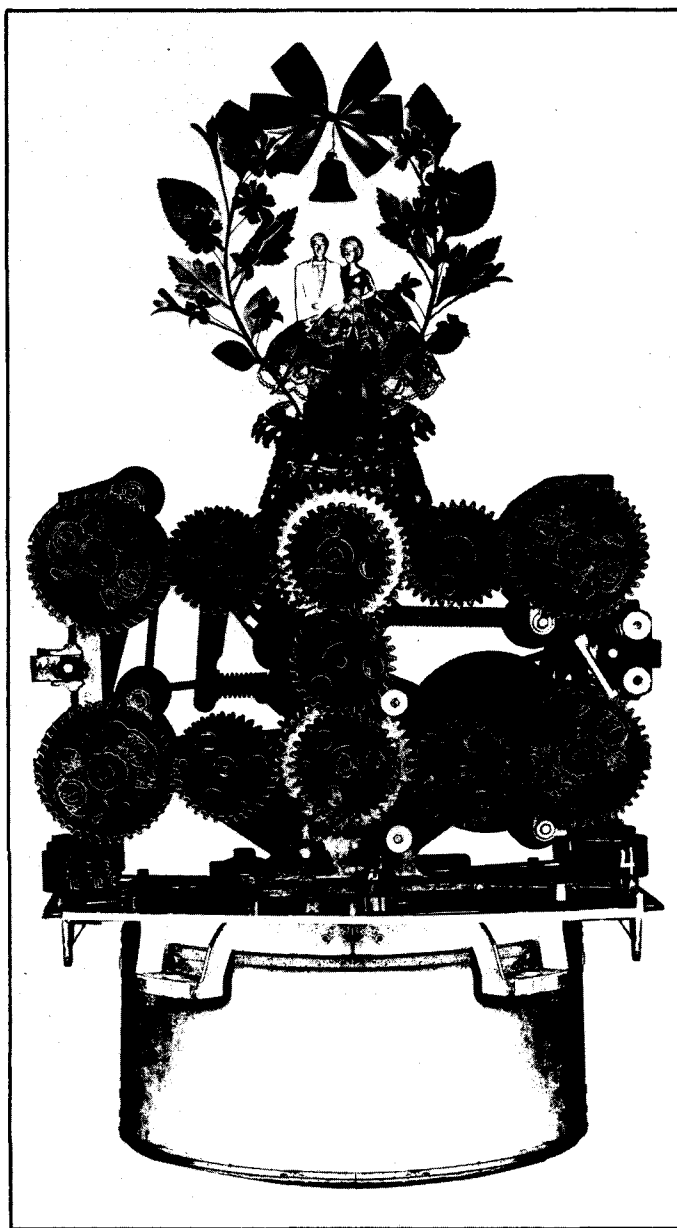
Sighing, chuckling, the minnow-busy
creek's summer-warm tides,
heartbeat of the sea,
steam and scurry.
The thatch of the marsh holds hard:
it crouches down on matted fibers
to quake at air but yield its seed to water.
Come January, grumbling glaciers
will walk uphill in the arms
of northeast gales to shear
a year's marsh hay
and macerate against the granite
piers of the bridge
the buried shells of snails.

Moles burrow down to the frostline.
Starlings hang on in holes
hard-won from woodpeckers.
Squirrels, walled up between
skyscrapers of hickory nuts (all
stolen except for a handful
of windfalls wrapped in their husks)
duck down under the barn.

Snow is coming. Snow
is coming. All but birds
will be buried. Water will
absent itself till spring
while earth locks up into its mineral meaning.
Only yesterday we breathed a world
of liquor and seed. It hardens now.
The little animals lie panting,
sleepless, winterless,
anticipating drift and flake,
awaiting the creak of snow beneath the paw-cushions,
the crackle of frozen meat
upon the tongue. Their lungs
bloom like flowers
at the alienation of the air.

AT THE END OF THE MECHANICAL AGE

A story by Donald Barthelme



I went to the grocery store to buy some soap. I stood for a long time before the soaps in their attractive boxes, RUB and FAB and TUB and suchlike, I couldn't decide so I closed my eyes and reached out blindly and when I opened my eyes I found her hand in mine.

Her name was Mrs. Davis, she said, and TUB was best for important cleaning experiences, in her opinion. So we went to lunch at a Mexican restaurant which as it happened she owned, she took me into the kitchen and showed me her stacks of handsome beige tortillas and the steam tables which were shiny-brite. I told her I wasn't very good with women and she said it didn't matter, few men were, and that nothing mattered, now that Jake was gone, but I would do as an interim project and sit down and have a Carta Blanca. So I sat down and had a cool Carta Blanca, God was standing in the basement reading the meters to see how much grace had been used up in the month of June. Grace is electricity science has found, it is not *like* electricity, it *is* electricity and God was down in the basement reading the meters in His blue jump suit with the flashlight stuck in the back pocket.

"The mechanical age is drawing to a close," I said to her.

"Or has already done so," she replied.

"It was a good age," I said. "I was comfortable in it, relatively. Probably I will not enjoy the age to come quite so much. I don't like its look."

"One must be fair. We don't know yet what kind of an age the next one will be. Although I feel in my bones that it will be an age inimical to personal well-being and comfort, and that is what I like, personal well-being and comfort."

"Do you suppose there is something to be done?" I asked her.

"Huddle and cling," said Mrs. Davis. "We can huddle and cling. It will pall, of course, everything palls, in time . . ."

Then we went back to my house to huddle and cling, most women are two different colors when they remove their clothes especially in summer but Mrs. Davis was all one color, an ocher. She seemed to like huddling and clinging, she stayed for many days. From time to time she checked the restaurant keeping everything shiny-brite and distributing sums of money to the staff, returning with tortillas in sacks, cases of Carta Blanca, buckets of guacamole, but I paid her for it because I didn't want to feel obligated.

There was a song I sang her, a song of great expectations.

"*Ralph is coming,*" I sang, "*Ralph is striding in his suit of lights over moons and mountains, over parking lots and fountains, toward your silky side. Ralph is coming, he has a coat of many colors and all major credit cards and he is striding to meet you and culminate your foggy dreams in an explosion of*"

blood and soil, at the end of the mechanical age. Ralph is coming preceded by fifty running men with spears and fifty dancing ladies who are throwing leaf spinach out of little baskets, in his path. Ralph is perfect," I sang, "but he is also full of interesting tragic flaws, and he can drink fifty running men under the table without breaking his stride and he can have congress with fifty dancing ladies without breaking his stride, even his socks are ironed, so natty is Ralph, but he is also right down in the mud with the rest of us, he markets the mud at high prices for specialized industrial uses and he is striding, striding, striding, toward your waiting heart. Of course you may not like him, some people are awfully picky . . . Ralph is coming," I sang to her, "he is striding over dappled plains and run-mad rivers and he will change your life for the better, probably, you will be fainting with glee at the simple touch of his grave gentle immense hand although I am aware that some people can't stand prosperity, Ralph is coming, I hear his hoofsteps on the drum-head of history, he is striding as he has been all his life toward you, you, you."

"Yes," Mrs. Davis said, when I had finished singing, "that is what I deserve, all right. But probably I will not get it. And in the meantime, there is you."

* * *

God then rained for forty days and forty nights, when the water tore away the front of the house we got into the boat, Mrs. Davis liked the way I maneuvered the boat off the trailer and out of the garage, she was provoked into a memoir of Jake.

"Jake was a straight-ahead kind of man," she said, "he was simpleminded and that helped him to be the kind of man that he was." She was staring into her Scotch-and-floodwater rather moodily I thought, debris bouncing on the waves all around us but she paid no attention. "That is the type of man I like," she said, "a strong and simpleminded man. The case-study method was not Jake's method, he went right through the middle of the line and never failed to gain yardage, no matter what the game was. He had a lust for life, and life had a lust for him, I was inconsolable when Jake passed away." Mrs. Davis was drinking the Scotch for her nerves, she had no nerves of course, she was nerveless and possibly heartless also but that is another question, gutless she was not, she had a gut and a very pretty one ocher in color but that was another matter. God was standing up to His neck in the raging waters with a smile of incredible beauty on His visage, He seemed to be enjoying His creation, the disaster, the waters all around us were raging louder now, raging like a mighty tractor-trailer tailgating you on the highway.

Donald Barthelme's latest collection of short stories, *Sadness*, was published last fall.

Then Mrs. Davis sang to me, a song of great expectations.

"Maude is waiting for you," Mrs. Davis sang to me, "Maude is waiting for you in all her seriousness and splendor, under her gilded onion dome, in that city which I cannot name at this time, Maude waits. Maude is what you lack, the profoundest of your lacks. Your every yearn since the first yearn has been a yearn for Maude, only you did not know it until I, your dear friend, pointed it out. She is going to heal your scrappy and generally unsatisfactory life with the balm of her Maude-ness, luckiest of dogs, she waits only for you. Let me give you just one instance of Maude's inhuman sagacity. Maude named the tools. It was Maude who thought of calling the rattail file a rattail file. It was Maude who christened the needle-nose pliers. Maude named the rasp. Think of it. What else could a rasp be but a rasp? Maude in her wisdom went right to the point, and called it rasp. It was Maude who named the maul. Similarly the sledge, the wedge, the ball-peen hammer, the adz, the shim, the hone, the strop. The handsaw, the hacksaw, the bucksaw, and the fretsaw were named by Maude, peering into each saw and intuiting at once its specialness. The scratch awl, the scuffle hoe, the prick punch and the countersink—I could go on and on. The tools came to Maude, tool by tool in a long respectful line, she gave them their names. The vise. The gimlet. The cold chisel. The reamer, the router, the gouge. The plumb bob. How could she have thought up the rough justice of these wonderful cognomens? Looking languidly at a pair of tin snips, and then deciding to call them tin snips—what a burst of glory! And I haven't even cited the bush hook, the grass snath, or the plumber's snake, or the C-clamp, or the nippers, or the scythe. What a tall achievement, naming the tools! And this is just one of Maude's contributions to our worldly estate, there are others. What delights will come crowding," Mrs. Davis sang to me, "delight upon delight, when the epithalamium is ground out by the hundred organ grinders who are Maude's constant attendants, on that good-quality day of her own choosing, which you have desperately desired all your lean life, only you weren't aware of it until I, your dear friend, pointed it out. And Maude is young but not too young," Mrs. Davis sang to me, "she is not too old either, she is just right and she is waiting for you with her tawny limbs and horse sense, when you receive Maude's nod your future and your past will begin."

There was a pause, or pall.

"Is that true," I asked, "that song?"

"It is a metaphor," said Mrs. Davis, "it has metaphorical truth."

"And the end of the mechanical age," I said, "is that a metaphor?"

"The end of the mechanical age," said Mrs. Davis, "is in my judgment an actuality straining to become a metaphor. One must wish it luck, I sup-

pose. One must cheer it on. Intellectual rigor demands that we give these damned metaphors every chance, even if they are inimical to personal well-being and comfort. We have a duty to understand everything, whether we like it or not—a duty I would scant if I could.” At that moment the water jumped into the boat and sank us.

* * *

At the wedding Mrs. Davis spoke to me kindly.

“Tom,” she said, “you are not Ralph, but you are all that is around at the moment. I have taken in the whole horizon with a single sweep of my practiced eye, no giant figure looms there and that is why I have decided to marry you, temporarily, with Jake gone and an age ending. It will be a marriage of convenience all right, and when Ralph comes, or Maude nods, then our arrangement will automatically self-destruct, like the tinted bubble that it is. You were very kind and considerate, when we were drying out, in the tree, and I appreciated that. That counted for something. Of course kindness and consideration are not what the great songs, the Ralph-song and the Maude-song, promise. They are merely flaky substitutes for the terminal experience. I realize that and want you to realize it. I want to be straight with you. That is one of the most admirable things about me, that I am always straight with people, from the sweet beginning to the bitter end. Now I will return to the big house where my handmaidens will proceed with the robing of the bride.”

It was cool in the meadow by the river, the meadow Mrs. Davis had selected for the travesty, I walked over to the tree under which my friend Blackie was standing, he was the best man, in a sense.

“This disgusts me,” Blackie said, “this hollow pretense and empty sham and I had to come all the way from Chicago.”

God came to the wedding and stood behind a tree with just part of His effulgence showing, I wondered whether He was planning to bless this makeshift construct with His grace, or not. It’s hard to imagine what He was thinking of in the beginning when He planned everything that was ever going to happen, planned everything exquisitely right down to the tiniest detail such as what I was thinking at this very moment, my thought about His thought, planned the end of the mechanical age and detailed the new age to follow, and then the bride emerged from the house with her train, all ocher in color and very lovely.

“And do you, Anne,” the minister said, “promise to make whatever mutually satisfactory accommodations necessary to reduce tensions and arrive at whatever previously agreed-upon goals both parties have harmoniously set in the appropriate planning sessions?”

“I do,” said Mrs. Davis.

“And do you, Thomas, promise to explore all differences thoroughly with patience and inner honesty ignoring no fruitful avenues of discussion and seeking at all times to achieve rapprochement while eschewing advantage in conflict situations?”

“Yes,” I said.

“Well, now we are married,” said Mrs. Davis, “I think I will retain my present name if you don’t mind, I have always been Mrs. Davis and your name is a shade graceless, no offense, dear.”

“OK,” I said.

Then we received the congratulations and good wishes of the guests, who were mostly employees of the Mexican restaurant, Raul was there and Consuelo, Pedro, and Pepe came crowding around with outstretched hands and Blackie came crowding around with outstretched hands, God was standing behind the caterer’s tables looking at the enchiladas and chalupas and chile con queso and chicken mole as if He had never seen such things before but that was hard to believe.

I started to speak to Him as all of the world’s great religions with a few exceptions urge, from the heart, I started to say “Lord, Little Father of the Poor and all that, I was just wondering now that an age, the mechanical age, is ending and a new age beginning or so they say, I was just wondering if You could give me a hint, sort of, not a Sign, I’m not asking for a Sign, but just the barest hint as to whether what we have been told about Your nature and our nature is, forgive me and I know how You feel about doubt or rather what we have been told You feel about it, but if You could just let drop the slightest indication as to whether what we have been told is authentic or just a bunch of apocryphal heterodoxy—”

But He had gone away with an insanely beautiful smile on His lighted countenance, gone away to read the meters and get a line on the efficacy of grace in that area, I surmised, I couldn’t blame Him, my question had not been so very elegantly put, had I been able to express it mathematically He would have been more interested, maybe, but I have never been able to express anything mathematically.

* * *

After the marriage Mrs. Davis explained marriage to me.

Marriage, she said, an institution deeply enmeshed with the mechanical age.

Pairings smiled upon by law were but reifications of the laws of mechanics, inspired by unions of a technical nature, such as nut with bolt, wood with woodscrew, aircraft with Plane-Mate.

Permanence or impermanence of the bond a function of (1) materials and (2) technique.

Growth of literacy a factor, she said.

Growth of illiteracy also.

The center will not hold if it has been spot-

welded by an operator whose deepest concern is not with the weld but with his lottery ticket.

God interested only in grace—keeping things humming.

Blackouts, brownouts, temporary dimmings of household illumination all portents not of Divine displeasure but of Divine indifference to executive development programs at middle-management levels.

He likes to get out into the field Himself, she said. With his flashlight. He is doing the best He can.

We two, she and I, no exception to general ebb/flow of world juice and its concomitant psychological effects, she said.

Bitter with the sweet, she said.

* * *

After the explanation came the divorce.

“Will you be wanting to contest the divorce?” I asked Mrs. Davis.

“I think not,” she said calmly, “although I suppose one of us should, for the fun of the thing. An uncontested divorce always seems to me contrary to the spirit of divorce.”

“That is true,” I said, “I have had the same feeling myself, not infrequently.”

After the divorce the child was born. We named him A.F. of L. Davis and sent him to that part of Russia where people live to be one hundred and ten years old. He is living there still, probably, growing in wisdom and beauty. Then we shook hands, Mrs. Davis and I, and she set out Ralphward, and I, Maudeward, the glow of hope not yet extinguished, the fear of pall not yet triumphant, standby generators ensuring the flow of grace to all of God’s creatures at the end of the mechanical age. □

READING THE HEADLINES

I have a burial ground in me where I place the bodies
without fuss or emotion, hundreds of thousands
at a glance. I stow them in and as it happens
I am eating dinner; I continue to eat,
feeding myself and the dead.

I walk around in this burial ground,
examining it with curiosity, find it dark
but stroll with a sense of safety, my own place.
I want to lie down in it, dissatisfied, true,
but seeing no exit, I lie down to rest and dream.

I am lost anyway, without horizon or recognizable
features. It’s just to walk on. At least
it’s not necessary to kill myself. I’ll die
of attrition of my energy to live.

I know my direction and have companions, after all.

by David Ignatow



A MAN OF UNNECESSARY THINGS

by Lillian Hellman

Arthur W. A. Cowan, Esquire, was not one of your run-of-the-mill unforgettable characters. To those who knew him, he was *the* unforgettable character. A successful playwright met him one night at a poetry reading, and there began a long-standing friendship marked by storms, ludicrosity, hilarity, and mystery.

Theodore Roethke and I stood in the back of the auditorium until the poet Babette Deutsch finished reading. I am a noisy audience in a theater, moving my body and feet without knowing it, cracking the knuckles of my hands, coughing. But I had been quiet that night because Ted had been tap-dancing in the back aisle to music that only he could hear and several people in the last row had objected.

When Babette finished, somebody whose name I do not remember came onstage and said things I wanted to hear but couldn't because Ted said, very loudly, "I have just made up a poem. It begins, 'Isn't it thrilling.' Now you write the next line. Go on, write the next line."

I smiled because that's usually safe with drunks, but it didn't work.

"You don't want to write a poem with me. I don't think you want to write a poem at all. OK. We'll write a play together, just the two of us. What you say to that?"

He said it again and poked me in the ribs. "Sure, Ted. A play," and hoped he wouldn't poke me again.

"You say sure, anything, sure, because no matter how much work *I* do on our play people will think *you* wrote it and I won't get any credit. So we'll sign an agreement to have one name for both of us. What name would you like?"

I said, "Let's go sit down. My feet hurt."

"Not until we find a name. I know, I know, I've got it. We'll sign it with the salmon. How about Irving K. Salmon? I like that, Irving K. Salmon, a good name."

All through dinner there had been talk of a salmon but I didn't know whether he was talking about a particular salmon or all salmon, because sometimes he talked about their spawning habits, sometimes he talked of one or two or eight fishing trips he had made, and once he told me about a nun he knew in Seattle who had caught a giant fish and given it to him.

Then another man came onstage, Roethke gave a whoop, pulled me by the hand, and dragged me down the aisle. "Now stop talking about our play. That can wait. I want to hear Cal."

We started into aisles that were already filled, backed out, crossed a number of annoyed people in the front row, and by this time had the full attention of our side of the house. Robert Lowell had started to read in a rather low voice by the time we finally sat down and I wondered how he would make out if Ted kept on talking. But he didn't. He sat hunched forward, moving his lips to the poems, smiling, applauding occasionally at the end of a line. After a long silence he said in a new, piping, child's voice that carried through our section, "The kid's good." I am sure the kid was good but I hadn't been listening: I was tired after hours of being moved around New York, the

pounding, often incoherent talk, the energy that had made us sprint into the zoo, running from monkey house to bird house, and then amble through lunch only to sprint again to visit a friend of Ted's who turned out to have moved from New York two years before.

When the Lowell reading was over, Ted made for backstage. He was ahead of me, forgetting me I think, but I decided not to follow him and walked slowly home, not expecting to see him again until the next time he came East.

In front of my house were Lowell, Ted, Babette, and three other people. Ted lifted me from the ground and said, "I told 'em you'd be right along after you had finished your secret pint."

To this day I do not know who two of the strangers were, but I came to know the third and he is the reason for my writing now about that night. I came to know his face as well as my own, but I have no memory of it that first time, nor did I then know his name.

I remember only that I found myself yawning into the face of a man sitting near me, yawned in another direction, and a few minutes later became conscious that the man had been staring at me for a long time, not with a flirting look, but as if he were trying to understand something.

He said, "Where do you keep your books?"

"Upstairs. There is a kind of library."

"Thank you," he said. "I am glad to know that."

And then I was too tired to care that neither of us said anything else. A little while later everybody went home except Ted, who was weaving back and forth in a kind of shuffle, his lips forming words I couldn't hear.

I said, "Ted, I'm sleepy."

He said, "Shh. I've got it. I've got it. The best poem written in our time. Now listen carefully: 'Isn't it thrilling there's another Trilling?' Got it? 'Isn't it thrilling there's another Trilling?' Got it? 'Isn't it thrilling there's another Trilling?'"

The second time he poked me in the ribs with his pleasure in creation, I said, sure, the poem was fine, but why didn't he go home. He gave me a sad, hurt look, fell on me from his side of the couch, and went to sleep immediately. I got from under his dangerous weight without waking him, but the next morning when I came down for breakfast he was gone. There was a note on the table: "I tell you it is thrilling, the Trilling. And just you remember about Irving K. Salmon."

I don't know how I came to mix up the salmon with the flowers, but four or five days later, Helen, a black woman who had worked for me

for many years, suddenly appeared in the reading room of the Society Library. When something important had happened, or she was disturbed, she made military gestures. Now she hit me on the shoulder, made a sign meaning I should follow her, and while we walked the few blocks to our house she said, "Mary is down with it again. This time she got her good reasons."

Mary and her husband Ed had been the janitors of the house for the many years I owned it. They were Irish, feckless, kind and often drunk, at which time they scattered into excitable pieces over nothing more than the mail being late or a light bulb wearing out.

"What's the matter this time?"

"I tell you this time she got her good reasons. A child's coffin. A child's coffin has come to the house."

"A child's coffin?"

"In a pine box. Dripping."

Indeed there was a pine box in the hall, it was the size of a small child, it was dripping, and most of the red lettering of the sender had been washed away. One could still read "Mother Joa—" and numbers that still had two eights in them. Mary and Ed were too upset for me to know or care whether they had been drinking, but when I said, "It smells of fish," Mary shrieked, went out into the street, and was followed by Ed, who took her arm and led her off, I guess, toward their favorite Lexington Avenue bar. Helen went to get the handyman from the apartment house next door and when he pried off the lid there was a large salmon lying on what had been a bed of ice. The fish was turning, not enough to make us sick, but enough to make us carry the box out to the street and close it up again.

In time, it turned out that Roethke had sent the salmon, and we exchanged a number of letters about it, although it was never clear about "Mother Joa—". A further mix-up came about because while we were opening the salmon box a large basket of flowers arrived, Helen put them on the floor, and somehow they got thrown out in the salmon excitement. I don't know why I thought Roethke had sent the flowers, but I thanked him, and long after I knew he had not sent them, he wrote that they came as a tribute because I liked his greenhouse poems.

A few weeks later another basket arrived. There were two enclosed cards: one from the lady florist, who wanted to know if I had received a basket sent a few weeks before, and a second card on which was printed "Arthur W. A. Cowan, Esquire" and then a designation I have long forgotten that meant he had something to do with the State of Pennsylvania. I did not recognize the name Cowan, had never before known an Esquire, wondered when you were entitled to use it. Later that day I tried to phone the lady florist to find out

Lillian Hellman, whose many plays include *The Little Foxes* and *Watch on the Rhine*, has just completed the second volume of her memoirs, *Pentimento*, from which this article is drawn. It will be published in September.

about the Esquire, but the phone was busy and I forgot about the whole thing until a third, even fancier arrangement arrived, with the same card and a scribbled sentence that thanked me for a nice evening.

I don't know when or how I connected the name with the man who had asked me about the books. It may have been because Lowell told me that he had never met Cowan before the night of the poetry reading but that he knew his name because Cowan had been a large financial contributor to *Poetry* magazine. Nor do I have any memory of how Cowan and I first came to have dinner together, and then to have another, and then to find ourselves good friends.

It is hard, indeed, to construct any history of Arthur, in part because he traveled so much, but mostly because he talked of his own past and present in so disjointed a fashion, often taking for granted that you knew what you could not have known, certain that you were pretending ignorance only to annoy him. He is the only person I have ever known who had no sense of time: he did not know whether he had met people last week or many years before, and once he told me he had been divorced for three years when, in fact, he had been divorced for fourteen. And so, in the first few months I knew him, I could follow very little of the mishmash of what he said, and knew only that he had gone to Harvard Law School, moved on to the Philippines, been poor and grown rich, now practiced law in Philadelphia, had a large number of brothers and sisters, three houses, and expensive motor cars which he was constantly exchanging to buy others.

His no sense of time was tied up with no sense of place, yours or his, so that he was bewildered and angered if you didn't know the names of his friends or the kind of work he did, even though nothing had ever been said about them. For example, the third time we had dinner he told me that he had spent much of his childhood in a Philadelphia orphan asylum.

I said, "But you're not an orphan. You just spoke of seeing your mother yesterday."

He was at that minute, as at so many other minutes, complaining about the steak he was eating, joking with the waiter about taking it back.

The good humor turned immediately to anger. "Goddamn it. That's the silliest stuff I ever heard anybody talk. You don't have to be an orphan to get into an orphan asylum. We were poor. We didn't have enough to eat. So they put two of us in the joint. Then sometimes when my father got a job they'd come and get us for a while and then bring us back again. I've told you all that a hundred times before."

In those early days of knowing him, I still be-

lieved in reasonability and so I tried to say he could not have told me a hundred times before, we had only known each other a few months. But before I could say that, he was telling the waiter that the steak was fine, but his dinner companion wasn't. I would have been angry, as I was to be many such times in the future, but that night I put down his sharpness with me to painful memories of the orphanage years.

I said, "I'm sorry. It must have been a bad time for you."

"What the hell are you talking about?" he said for the next four tables. "It was the best goddamned time of my life. It was clean, and there was meat every day. They had books and it was there I learned to read. It was the best part of my life and you're an ass. Even you. All women. Every goddamned woman is an ass."

He shouted for the check, left the waiter an enormous tip, put me in a taxi, and marched off. The next day an arrangement of flowers arrived and I threw them out.

A few weeks went by, perhaps a month, and then I had a telephone call. He said, very cheerfully, "What's the weather like?"

"It's a sunny day, but not for you and me. How is it in Philadelphia?"

"I'm in London and I called to say that I don't bear any grudge against you. I'll be back tomorrow and will take you to dinner."

I said I didn't intend to eat dinner the next night and he laughed and hung up.

The following night I was having a tray in bed and listening to the phonograph when Helen came in, turned off the phonograph, and said, "Can you hear it now?"

"Hear what?"

"There's something bad going on in the elevator."

The house had a small self-service elevator, but once inside you needed a key to get out or somebody to open the door on our side. It was an old elevator, and although nothing much had ever happened to it, we were always conscious that it might stick or fall, or that, without care, we could admit intruders. I got out of bed, went to the elevator door, and when I asked who was there the rhythmic pounding ceased.

A voice said, "Who wants to know?"

"I want to know."

"Who are you?" a second, high voice said.

Helen said, "Tell them to go out the way they came."

The first voice said, "Who said that? How many thieves are in my house?"

The elevator began to move upward. Helen whispered, "Don't open the door. There's more than one." The elevator went past us and continued up to the floor of my tenant.

The high voice said, "Open up or I'll shoot the place down."

My tenants, above me, had an elderly Japanese cook, and after a minute we could hear him running down the service stairs.

Helen said, "There goes the Jap. You can't blame the poor soul."

Like most people my age, I had a hard time believing in city crime, perhaps in any kind of danger. So I said to Helen, as I would not say today, "Let the Jap in our service door and tell him there's nothing to be afraid of."

Then, very loudly, I shouted into the elevator door, "Please leave the house immediately."

"What'll you do if we don't?"

"Call the police. So go immediately."

"I've got a better idea," said a voice, now undisguised. "Get dressed and I'll buy you a decent steak."

A few hours later, sitting next to him in his newest Aston-Martin, having just had a bad steak in a restaurant somebody had told him about—somebody was always telling him about a restaurant; in the years I knew him I don't think we ever went twice to the same place—I said, "Arthur, you're too young for me."

"Without question. How old are you?"

"Forty-eight. Too old for your high jinks. How old are you?"

He said he was forty-two, and I didn't know that night why he coughed so much after he said it, nor why he stared at me so hard when we reached my door.

I was to find out a few weeks later. It started when the mail brought an engraved invitation for a dinner party to be given in Philadelphia by Arthur W. A. Cowan, Esquire, in honor of Miss Lillian Hellman. Although the engraving proved that the party must have been planned weeks before, I had had on the Sunday before the arrival of the card a most disturbing time with Arthur.

On that bad Sunday, driving to the country on the first lovely spring day, as the Saw Mill River Parkway went by the turnoff, I said that the farm I had owned for so many years was just around the bend, over the bridge. This was the first time since I had sold it that I found myself so close to it, and if I was silent for a long time it was because I was trying not to cry. After a while, he stared at me and asked irritably why, if I liked the place so much, I had sold it. He knew why, because I had told him, and so I didn't answer until the question was repeated.

"The House Un-American Activities Committee. The Joe McCarthy period. I went broke. I've told you all that, Arthur."

"Yeah," he said, "but I never understood it."

"OK."

But he was not a man to leave things alone when the toothache of blind contention was upon

him, and so, after a while, he said again that he didn't understand what Joe McCarthy had to do with the sale of a farm and he thought I was just blaming my mistake on somebody else. I knew, of course, before that day that his politics were eccentric, going in one direction on some days, in another the next. He was solidly conservative, sympathetic to every piece of legislation that benefited the rich, was the attorney for millionaires like Del Webb, and yet was a close friend of Mark De Wolfe Howe of Harvard and the Philadelphia liberal lawyer Thomas McBride. We had had no previous political arguments, in part because the mishmash he talked was too hard to follow, but mostly because I had already learned that I could not, did not wish to explain, or be wise about, or handle the bitter storm that the McCarthy period caused, causes, in me, and knew even then that the reason for the storm was not due to McCarthy, McCarran, Nixon, and all the rest, but was a kind of tribal turn: against friends, half-friends, or people I didn't know but had previously respected. Some of them, called before the investigating committees, had sprinted to demean themselves, apologizing for sins they never committed, making vivid and lively for the committees and the press what had never existed; others, almost all American intellectuals, had stood watching that game, giving no aid to the weak or the troubled, resting on their own fancy reasons. Years later, in the 1960s, when another generation didn't like them for it, they claimed they had always been anti-McCarthy when they meant only they were sorry he was not a gentleman, had made a fool of himself, and thus betrayed them. That was, that is, to me the importance of the period—the McCarthys came, will come again, and will be forgotten—and the only time I ever heard all that properly analyzed was by Richard Crossman in London, and although I have never seen Mr. Crossman again, I have often wished that he had written it down. It is eccentric, I suppose, not to care much about the persecutors and to care so much about those who allowed the persecution, but it was as if I had been deprived of a child's belief in tribal safety. I was never again to believe in it, and resent to this day that it has been taken from me. I had only one way out, and that I took: to shut up about the whole period.

And so on that day, driving in the country, I had no words. But by the time we returned to New York I was so shocked at the insensibility that forced Arthur to make fun of what had harmed me and had sent my friend Dashiell Hammett to jail, that I felt nothing more than weariness and that I must not ever listen to such stuff again.

A few days later, I wrote Arthur a note saying what I felt, found the note incoherent, tore it up, telephoned to say that I couldn't come to my party. The operator said he was in Paris. I telephoned him in Paris, the hôtel said he was in Lon-

don. I got him in London, and before I was able to say much of anything he told me that he had just taken to dinner a woman who had on a red coat, he hated red coats, would never see the woman again, didn't know what I was talking about but was in the middle of a meeting, and had just bought me a bracelet. He hung up, and when I called him the next day I heard him tell the operator that Mr. Cowan was not available.

Somewhere in the next few weeks, I had dinner with Mark and Molly Howe in Boston. I told them about Cowan's defense of McCarthy. Mark got up from the table and didn't come back for a while. Molly said of course they had heard the same kind of thing, and when Mark came back in the room he said, "Arthur is unbearable, unbearable." He was so disturbed that we ate our dinner almost in silence, only speaking when the Howe children came in and out of the room. Mark and Molly walked me back to my hotel and, as we stood in front of it, Mark's fine face was obviously getting ready for something difficult. He said, "He is unbearable. He is unbearable. But it is only fair to tell you that his opinions often have nothing to do with his actions. I once told him about a Communist who had no money for legal defense. He paid the total bill and sent the wife a thousand dollars. I don't know his friend Tom McBride, but I am told he has another form of the same story." Molly said she thought maybe Arthur was just plain crazy, but I think both of them were saying they would understand if I wrote him off, but they hoped I wouldn't. I didn't.

A few weeks ago, thinking about that night, I wrote to Molly Howe, who has moved to Dublin since the death of Mark Howe. She does not refer to that night; perhaps she doesn't remember it. But she understood Arthur:

Dear Lillian: What can I say of Arthur? It's like roaming through a churchyard and picking out the names of old friends on the tombstones. Mark, Johnny Ames, Arthur Cowan, Bunny Lang, my old father-in-law, Felix Frankfurter, McBride, Joe Wall, all of them strung together by one name—Arthur's.

Arthur becomes a game of true or false. What did you or I *really* know about him?

I first met him a few years after the war. We had dinner, Mark, Johnny Ames and I at the Athens Olympia. He was then triumphing over the winning of some case in New Jersey, I think, and I think it was connected with aspirin, which indeed one was inclined to need after a few hours in his rather fevered company.

And after that . . . flying visits into the law school. Everyone knocked out of their legal torpor. Griswold actually took to hiding. Always with a

new sports car, wearing frightfully expensive, rather gaudy clothes, driving like a madman; off to the Ritz; bursting into the Poets Theatre. You almost knew by the weather when Arthur was coming. Something threatening about those clouds massing in the north. And you never knew he was coming until he was there. And the letters from Paris, from London, from Rome, from Hawaii, from the desk of Arthur Cowan. It must have been a flying desk.

I've never had such a curious relationship with a man before or since. It was purely friendly, almost fraternal. I really confided in him. I wrote him constantly, and the things he told me as well—true or false? To this day I do not know which. Brought up in an orphanage, number 58. That's why the number of our house 58 Highland Street was so important. He was convinced he would die when he was 58! Father killed himself during the Depression. Worked his way through college by professional boxing. Belonged to a delightful club in New York called the Bucket of Blood. Was married once to some girl in Philadelphia who played too much tennis. It broke up. He had girls everywhere. Two of them in London, and he had great difficulty keeping them apart. A girl in Paris—very special. Never liked actresses. Never liked models. All lesbians at heart and everywhere else. Once caught them in the very act.

Arthur as a houseguest was not good. Stayed with us four days on the Cape in 1954. Would only eat steak and lettuce three times a day. Insisted on going round three-quarters naked with shaven chest. This last revolted Mark. We had some stuffy neighbors to cocktails and Arthur sat in a stately manner (this was six P.M.) naked except for a slight pair of pants, reading a life of Byron. "Arthur," I hissed in passing, "this man is a brother-in-law of the Rockefellers." When I looked round again he had vanished, went upstairs, came down twenty minutes later in an immaculate white linen suit. Unfortunately the Rockefeller contingent had gone. The next night we all went to dinner in Provincetown with Isabella Gardner and her brother Bob. Sudden outbreak from Arthur, who had been curiously quiet all evening. Shouted at Bob Gardner, "You're stupid! Phony! Numb! Ridiculous!" All heads turned in his direction. Nobody could understand it. Belle G. was furious and would never meet him again. A year or two later during the summer he suddenly shouted at Perry Miller—we were having cocktails on the porch, Perry as I remember was offering some learned information on Cotton Mather—"You're posturing. Why are you always posturing?" I don't believe Arthur knew whether Cotton Mather was a textile or a boll weevil, but suddenly something infuriated him. As he was always in very good trim and looked, with that broken nose, like an aging but powerful boxer, nobody cared to take things up with him.

And his health. He was always having mysterious operations. He went through a period of having someone come in and give him an enema every day. He took royal jelly. Some great man in New York took care of his teeth. A splendid fellow in Switzerland for the eyes. Somebody in Philadelphia for the gallbladder and he told Mark he had himself sterilized in Paris. He didn't want any trouble of that kind. Paternity suits. Can't be too careful. And the diets. I never knew anyone to go through such rigorous and varied diets. Do you remember the time he had to have raw parsley and carrots? Then there was the tablespoon of vinegar and all red meat phase and the exercises.

Every time he arrived there was a new and expensive camera. Color Polaroid long before anyone else and the constant taking of photographs was a ritual which had to be gone through on arrival and the camera was usually so new, so expensive, so complicated he didn't know how to use it. The cursing and swearing was heartrending.

Johnny Ames, for instance. Why did Arthur like such a New England Henry Jamesian old bachelor with very little money, of no importance in the world, because let's face it Arthur did like the Big Names. Why? And Johnny was fascinated by Arthur. They always had to meet when Arthur was in Cambridge. And they always talked about money. Do you remember Arthur talking about money? He talked about it the way some people talk about poetry. The voice was low and reverent, the face radiated a beautiful joy, and Johnny listened as if Arthur was the oracle, and Arthur advised Johnny on how to invest his little bit of capital. Advised him so well that by the time Johnny died he had almost doubled it. They conversed a great deal in French which was another bond and Johnny made the best martinis in Boston.

Why did he like V. R. Lang? A way-out blonde girl who wrote two good plays and some poetry and died of cancer aged thirty—a year after her very happy marriage. He met Bunny at the Poets Theatre, was fascinated by her play and fascinated by her world of Frank O'Hara, Bob Bly, Ted Gorey. It was through Bunny, in some way, he met you, Lillian, and moved into the Big World of Brains and never was happier. It all culminated for me at that wonderful house party, Birthday Party, weekend in Vineyard Haven that you gave for Arthur. How old was he then? It must have been twelve years ago. McBride was there and the Bernsteins and the Warburgs for dinner. Before Mark and I left that Monday morning, Arthur said to me, in that curious falsetto whisper: "It's not often you spend a weekend with all the people you like best. I have a feeling it only happens once." I have often thought of that since. Was it prescience?

He was a good friend. When Mark had a bad go of flu from overwork I told Arthur that Mark simply could not go on with the second volume of the

Holmes and carry on a full teaching schedule at the law school. It took Arthur only a few weeks to manage that. Mark was relieved of half the law school load and Arthur paid the half of his salary on a grant basis. In fact, if it hadn't been for Arthur, vol. II would never have been written, and if it hadn't been for vol. II, Mark might have lived longer.

Then there was the episode of Little Hel. Do you remember our youngest daughter was always known by Arthur as Little Hel? One afternoon he and Mark went for a walk round Eagle Pond on the Cape and unknown to them Little Hel took it into her head to follow them through bush and through briar a good mile on her own wobbly legs. She caught up with them eventually and Arthur couldn't get over it. The courage! The guts! The determination! He carried her back the rest of the way on his shoulders. He was almost crying. Of course he was going to mention her in his will. That well-known will of Arthur's that you and so many others were going to benefit by.

Did you ever read his poems? He brought out a book of poems I think in the late Forties. I had a copy once. God knows where it went. They were, of course, very bad.

And then those books inscribed to us by authors who had never heard of us, with Arthur standing over them with a gun. "To my dear friends Mark and Mollie Howe from André Maurois, with the compliments of Arthur Cowan." *You* must have several shelves of them.

He was a James Bond character. You remember the sudden sinking of the voice to a whisper and the shifty look around and quick glance over the shoulder? What was he up to?

Well, he died alone on a dusty road in Spain, our friend, and we don't even know the truth about that.

And so I went to the party. I was taken first to what he called the guesthouse—Cowan owned two houses in Philadelphia—and then hustled around to where he lived in the few weeks of the year when he lived in any one place. It was a handsome old house in Rittenhouse Square, the windows spoiled with ugly draperies, the furniture heavy expensive copies of what the movies think is an English great-house library. I dislike dark rooms and so, without plan, I went to one of the windows and pushed aside the draperies to see the view. Arthur dashed for the draperies, closed them, and shrieked at me: "My books! My books! Don't do that."

"Don't do what?"

"Don't let in any light. It will harm the bindings. Why don't you know such things? I'll tell you why—because you don't have a fine binding in the world."

"I don't like them," I said. "If I had the courage, I'd throw out all my books, buy nothing but paperbacks, replace them—"

"I can't stand what you're saying, I can't stand it. You're not fit to touch a book in this house. I forbid you to *touch my books*."

The first guest came in on the shouting. Arthur immediately put an arm around me, his voice low, immensely loving. "This, I am proud to say, is my friend Lillian Hellman."

It was the usual cocktail stuff before dinner, but I was uneasy at being shown off and uncomfortable under the almost constant stare of a pretty girl across the room. At dinner I sat next to Tom McBride, whom I liked immediately. I knew that he had defended two radicals during the McCarthy period, and when I spoke of it and said there weren't many lawyers, certainly not successful ones, who had such courage, McBride pointed down the table to Cowan.

"That nut made it possible. I couldn't afford to take the cases, with a family and growing children, couldn't have involved my law partners. Cowan gave me all I needed through that time even though he hated what I was doing. He's a nut, but you'll get used to him, if you can stay with the nuttiness without wearing out. God knows what goes on in his head, if anything, but he'll kick through every time, without questions, and without wanting thanks, for the few people he has any respect for, and you're already one of them, the only woman it's ever happened with, and you must remember that."

I did remember it a few years later. Cowan said, "What's the matter with you? You haven't said a word for an hour." I said nothing was the matter, not wishing to hear his lecture about what was. After an hour of nagging, by the repetition of "Spit it out," "Spit it out," I told him about a German who had fought in the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, been badly wounded, and was now very ill in Paris without any money. I said that I had sent some, but not enough.

Arthur screamed, "Since when do you have enough money to send anybody a can to piss in? Hereafter, I handle all your money and you send nobody anything. And a man who fought in Spain has to be an ass Commie and should take his punishment."

I said, "Oh, shut up, Arthur."

And he did, but that night as he paid the dinner check, he wrote out another check and handed it to me. It was for a thousand dollars.

I said, "What's this for?"

"Anybody you want."

I handed it back.

He said, "Oh, for Christ sake take it and tell yourself it's for putting up with me."

"Then it's not enough money."

He laughed. "I like you sometimes. Give it to

the stinking German and don't say where it comes from because no man wants money from a stranger."

I sent the money to Gustav and a few months later had a letter from his wife asking if I knew anything about an American who had appeared at the hospital, left an envelope for Gustav with five hundred dollars, refused his name, spoke fine French, and had asked the nun at the desk if she fucked around very much.

But that day after the Philadelphia dinner party, the day he shoved in my pocket the largest and most vulgar topaz pin I have ever seen, and was strangely silent and thoughtful, was the day that marked our relationship for the rest of his life. We were driving back to New York—it is strange that almost every memory of Arthur is connected to a restaurant or to a car—and I had not talked to him very much because I sensed that he was on the verge of a temper. (I was to realize in the years to come that sadness often looked like temper, often turned into it, as if he were rejecting despair for something healthier.) As Arthur slowed down from his usual speed of a hundred miles an hour to avoid hitting two other cars, he said, "I'm the only good driver in America. Sons of bitches." Then he sighed. "Well, I might as well tell you, that's that. All my friends last night think you're too old for me."

I laughed. "Too old for what?"

"For me. I'm five or six years younger than you are, and they think that wouldn't be any good."

"What wouldn't be any good?"

He shifted around. He was uneasy, embarrassed, and that was always one step in front of irrationality. I should have been ready.

"You know what I'm talking about. Stop pretending."

"I don't know what you're talking about, Arthur."

"You know damn well. You're a combination of shyster lawyer and Jesuit. I mean you are too old for me to marry. That's what I mean and you made me say it."

I said, "That's not the way it is or ever could be."

"It's always the way it is. For every goddamn broad that ever lived. Marriage, marriage, marriage."

"Not for me. Twice in my life, maybe, but not about you. I wouldn't marry you, Arthur, I never even thought about it."

"Like hell you wouldn't, like hell." He stopped the car in the middle of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. "You're lying. You'd marry me in a minute. Maybe not for anything but my money, but I'm not marrying you, see?"

I opened the door of the car and got out, getting home late that night by walking a long way to a place that suggested I call another place for a taxi.

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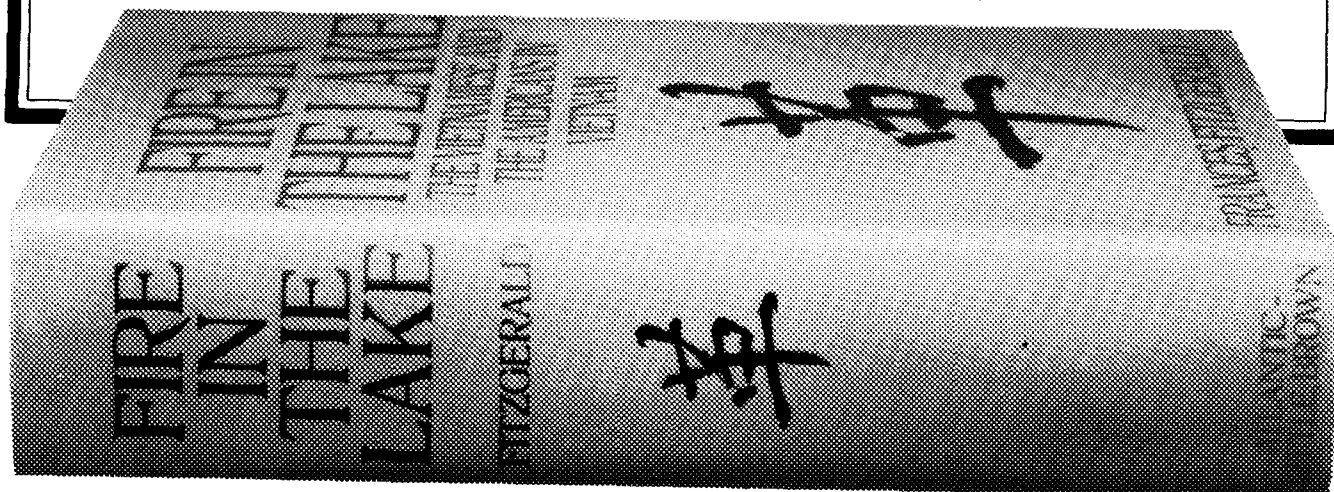
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ATLANTIC-LITTLE, BROWN



But this time, the next day, in fact, I called him. I had not slept much that night, waking up to read, and to think about Arthur. I was what he wanted to want, did not want, could not ever want, and that must have put an end to an old dream about the kind of life that he would never have because he didn't really want it. We have all done that about somebody, or place, or work, and it's a sad day when you find out that it's not accident or time or fortune but just yourself that kept things from you. Years later, when Arthur was telling me about "a beautiful model who double-crossed me when I'd have given her the money without the double cross," I told him what I had thought that night when he blamed my age and his friends for not wanting to marry me. He patted my arm and said, "Aah. Aah. Sometimes you're not an ass. Why don't I buy you a pound of caviar?"

When I say years later and things like that, I am not sure they are accurate. I did sometimes make notes in a diary, I have a large number of letters from Arthur, I remember more about him than I do about most people, and I know I can put together the order of his words with accuracy, but time, in his case, skips about for me, and I often mix up the places where we met, so that something that might have happened in Paris I have possibly transferred to Martha's Vineyard or Beverly Hills. The passing of time, the failure of memory, did not cause those confusions: they were always there, perhaps because we never shared ordinary days together, more probably because everything about his life, the present and the past, was in jump-bites: he would tell a story about friends but he would start the story in the middle; he would ask you to regret a building he had just sold when he had not told you he had ever owned it; if he told a joke, he would start with the last line and go backward; if he wanted to talk about a woman he was tired of, he started to tell you about another woman he had been tired of twenty years before.

I did piece together a kind of history, but I am not sure how much of it happened before I met him or after I knew him, since there was no way of sorting the past from the present. I knew that he didn't practice law much anymore, but that he was always suing somebody or some organization, and since that happened at least four or five times a year, I would get the details and the results mixed up. I knew that he had made a lot of money, before I met him, as counsel for a large drug company in a patent suit and that he took stock instead of a legal fee. (It is indicative that Molly Howe remembers the legal fight as having to do with aspirin and I remember it as benzedrine, and it was probably neither.) I knew that he was a large investor in the stock market and a

brilliant one. But I only knew that because sometime in the first two years I knew him, he said, "Where is your money invested?"

"I don't have much anymore. I have the house on Eighty-second Street, but—"

"What the hell did you do with all you earned?"

I said we were on a sensitive subject, the Joe McCarthy period and no work in Hollywood, and thought we better not get into an argument.

He said, "Don't tell me the reasons. Just go upstairs and get me all your records. Checkbooks, mortgages, everything. You'll starve in the streets without me, that's where you'll end."

The following day I telephoned to say I needed my checkbook because I forgot I was leaving in a few days for London. Arthur said, "I'll give it to you at the airport." Of course I thought he meant the airport in New York and tried to reach him when he wasn't there. He was waiting for me at the London airport and swore that he had told me that. He had a new Rolls-Royce, his third in about two years, and drove me to the hotel. As I was signing, and the manager came to greet me, Arthur said, "One room, not two, and make it a cheap one. Miss Hellman has wasted more money than anybody since Hubert Delahantey."

It was many references later, and many years, before I asked about Hubert Delahantey. It turned out he never existed in life: he was a rich American drunk who threw away all his money and died in a Paris garret in a novel Arthur had once bought at a French railroad bookstand but whose title he couldn't remember.

The following night, when the *Candide* rehearsals were over, Arthur came around to the theater to take me to a new restaurant somebody had just told him about. After he had gone through his usual denunciation of the steak, he put my checkbook on the table.

"From now on you can have fifty percent of what you earn. I will invest the rest. You know nothing about money and are a disgrace. You'll end in a charity hospital and die without a pot to piss in or a bone to chew."

I said, "You talk too much about my death. And if that's the way it's going to be, then it won't be much different from the rest of the world."

"You're the kind of fool who has forgotten more than you ever learned," he said so loudly that the next table of six upper-class English ladies and gentlemen looked down at their plates.

I said, "The English don't raise their voices, Arthur, although they may have other vulgarities."

"Fuck the British. I think they were in collusion with the Germans all through the war."

At the next table one man spoke to another man and the second man got up and came to our table. Arthur rose, grinning with pleasure.

He said, "My dear, good sir. During my attendance at Harvard, a university situated in Boston, the Athens of America, I was middleweight intercollegiate boxing champion and I am flattered that you recognize me. Let me buy you a drink."

The man, who was a tall, good-looking example of Empire, said he did not wish a drink, but he felt impelled to say that he thought insults to the English in their homeland were totally inappropriate for a foreign guest. Arthur gave a mirthless bad-actor laugh and said he wasn't anybody's guest: his hotel and this restaurant were gyp joints, what the hell did guest mean when you paid your way and the billions we spent with the Marshall Plan?

I got up and said, "I'm going to the toilet. Leave a note what jail you're in or what hospital."

When I came back Arthur had joined the English table and was sitting with his arm around the tall gentleman. After he had introduced me he whispered that Sir Francis was a distinguished barrister, they had many friends in common. After half an hour I said I was tired and wanted to go to bed.

Sir Francis said, "You're not going back to the toilet?"

I didn't much understand that or the giggles that went round the table until Arthur, walking me to the hotel, said, "They didn't like your saying toilet. I don't either and have always meant to tell you. Why can't you say ladies' room like other people? Sir Francis didn't like it for his wife. He said, 'I've heard of Mrs. Hellman. But even an actress needn't say toilet.'"

"And what did you say, Arthur?"

"I said Miss Hellman is a playwright, most distinguished, and they made me name the plays. Anyway, we're invited to dine in the country with them tomorrow. Don't wear that tweed coat. Wear something quiet, black."

When we got to the hotel I said, "I am now going upstairs to the toilet and so I won't be able to go to the country with you tomorrow. If you don't tell them you are a Jew they'll think you're charming, but you can even tell them that if you also tell them how rich you are and very possibly good business for them."

We did not mention Sir Francis again until many months after we had both returned to New York and after somebody told me that Arthur had appointed him his representative in London.

I said, "Nice about you and Sir Francis. Have you given him enough business to install a toilet?"

"So you've heard about her," he said. "Want to see her picture?"

He took out of his wallet one of the many snapshots he was always taking with the most expensive of cameras he had just broken. A youngish woman was standing against a very large house, her entire body and face shaded by giant trees.

"Admit that she's a beauty," Arthur said.

"I can't see her. You can never see anybody in your pictures."

"I should tell you that I may decide to marry her."

"Who is she?"

"She is the niece of Sir Francis. A great beauty. I call her Lady Sarah."

(He did not lie, I guess. He did call her Lady Sarah but it was only last year that I discovered her name was not Sarah, she had no title, and neither, for that matter, did Sir Francis. Arthur had bestowed the titles upon them as a sign of the esteem he then felt.)

It is a strange side of many women that they are jealous even when they do not want the man, but I was old enough to watch for that and wait it out. I suppose I waited it out without speaking because after a while he said, "Don't worry."

I said I wouldn't and he said he thought I should and I asked him why and he said I was hiding things and he didn't like me when I did that. After we had batted that around for a long time, he said, "Don't you, don't you, well? . . ."

"Don't I what?"

It is hard now to believe that I didn't know what he wanted me to feel and say, and certainly the stumbling words, so unlike him, the sadness in the face, should have told me. But even if I had known in time the minute was gone.

"Don't I what?"

The sadness disappeared. He clipped out the words, "Worry about my money. You don't have to. Marry or not I'll take care of you."

I said I was having more trouble than usual finding out what he was talking about, and when he shouted, "My will. After I die. That's what I'm talking about," I thought it wiser to be off in another direction. So I asked him what had happened to the lady in Philadelphia and the one in Paris, had he told them about Lady Sarah?

"I'm through with them. If you ever listened you'd have known that months ago. Tomorrow morning I am flying to Hollywood for a vasectomy. Between that shit orthodontist and the abortions, I spent fifteen thousand six hundred dollars last year."

The complaints about the orthodontist were old stuff but the vasectomy was new. I said, "If you're getting married, why do you want a vasectomy?"

"Who wants children in this stinking world? I spent my life wondering why they ever had me. Who wants to throw out five thousand six hundred dollars on abortions?"

"You," I said, "for ladies who pocket four thousand of it."

We were at my front door. I said, "Arthur, you know that Hammett lives here now, is very sick, that means I don't get much sleep and am tired most of the time. Good night."

"So you don't want to talk about my marriage?"

If it worried you, if you were going to miss me, that would be something else. But you're just afraid the marriage will cut you out of my will, no money for you. I've told you, and I'll keep my word, I'll take care of you."

And he pushed me through my door and went down the street. I stood in the kind of anger I hadn't known for many years but which, even as a young child, I knew was uncaring of consequence, without control, murderous. I ran down the street and caught him as he was stepping into a taxi. I grabbed his arm and spun him around and spoke in the tones of quiet reasonability which have always been for me the marks of greatest anger. "Stop trying to buy me. You've been doing it too long. Not you or my mother's family or anybody else and just maybe because I am frightened it could happen. So skip me and have your vasectomy and your teeth fixed and your face operated on again and leave me alone and don't mention money or your goddamn will again."

I stopped in pain at what I had let slip. For two years I had pretended that I didn't know that this interesting looking man didn't like his face, had had two operations in Hollywood to correct what he didn't like, and neither had corrected anything except to make him look assembled. They had taken away the lively brightness, the amusing crinkles of time, all that had been good.

He said quietly, "You don't think the operations made me look better?" Then he turned and took a long time to pay off the taxi driver and when I saw his face the tears had stopped. He took my arm and we walked up and down the same Madison Avenue block for an hour or so, neither of us speaking. Then, from the corner, I saw the light in Hammett's room go on, which meant that the night was over for him. We turned down to the house.

I said, "There would be no meaning to any apology, no sense saying I didn't mean to hurt you, because I did. When I get like this it's better to be rid of me." We shook hands and I went upstairs.

One likes to think that words are understood, that what has been painful or forbidden will not happen again. But a few weeks later I had a note from Arthur: "I canceled the vasectomy, although I'll probably have it another time. If then I die on the operating table, you'll be a very rich woman."

I can no longer remember how long after that night we let each other rest in a kind of unplanned moratorium, but long after his death, one of his many stockbrokers told me that during that time the market had fallen sharply and that Arthur had put up a good deal of his own money to carry the margin account he had insisted I have; and sometime during that period a puzzling letter arrived from Barclays Bank in London tell-

ing me that Mr. Arthur W. A. Cowan had instructed them to notify me that in the event of his death securities had been placed in their vaults for me, although, of course, they could not reveal the nature or the amount. It was with that letter that I knew he had understood nothing of what we had said on our long walk up and down Madison Avenue and that there would never again be any point in telling him that what was proof of friendship to him wasn't, necessarily, for me. I felt self-righteous about that, as I frequently have about other people's money stuff, until Helen, a few days after Christmas, showed me a hundred-dollar bill Arthur had sent her.

"My," she said.

"If you want to send it back, don't worry about me."

"He means no harm," she said. "You never understood that."

Helen was a fine cook, the best I've ever known, and the nicest times we had together were in the kitchen. It had long been our habit, if we were alone, to make each other a gift dinner: she cooked me something I liked and I made her something she had come to like, my "foreign stuff," which she pretended she would never learn. That night I was making her saffron rice.

"Buy yourself a new coat with the hundred. You need it."

"No, I don't. The hundred dollars came pinned to a new coat. It's too small, of course."

Helen was a very big woman and the picture of Arthur trying to guess her size made me laugh.

"The coat be good for my niece. He means well. Men are different. You ain't ever learned that."

"Better than we are? Worse?"

"Different. Where is Mr. Cowan?"

I thought I knew what she meant. She could barely write the alphabet and could spell very few words.

"You can thank him on the phone."

"I ain't worried about thanks and neither is he. You ought to write him, it's a shame. He's doing what we all must do, come soon, come late, getting ready for the summons, and you ought to put out a hand."

That kind of talk was a part of her Catholic convert nature. It had happened before! If I argued with her there was a chance of depriving her of what she needed, but to be silent made hypocrisy between us and she had often played at seeing which she could catch me at. But now, although I only half understood, I was disturbed.

"Getting ready for the summons? What do you mean?"

When she didn't answer me, I said, "You talk too much about death. And he's a Jew. We don't get ready for the summons."

"Jew, not Jew. Nobody's anything. We all lost sheep."

I had heard this many times before and I knew I could annoy her by quoting the Reverend Whittier, a famous Negro backwoods preacher of her childhood and my mother's. "Sheep? The Reverend Whittier didn't like sheep. He said, 'Rise up and make yourself in the image of the lion. Throw off the shackles, grab away the whip, cut the chains of your oppressors as the lion would spring from . . .'"

"Oh, sure," she said, "sure enough. If we took away the whip and cut the chains the white man would atom us out."

I laughed because I knew she wouldn't like it. She said, "I ain't talking about black nor white. I'm talking Bible, the summons to the Lord. The horn's over the hill but Mr. Cowan's been hearing it for years."

"Mr. Cowan's been hearing nothing but the sizzling of steaks, the crackle of money, and airplane engines. What are you talking about?"

"Write him," she said. "Tell him my coat's fine and the money too."

All my life, beginning at birth, I have taken orders from black women, wanting them and resenting them, being superstitious the few times I disobeyed. So I did write about the money and the coat and for months received no answer. But in June of that year, a few months after Helen, Hammett, and I moved to Martha's Vineyard, I had a note from Arthur saying he'd like to come up for my birthday. I postponed telling Dash that he was coming. He had never met Arthur but he didn't like visitors, didn't like their seeing how sick he was, and would disappear into his part of the house during any visit. In any case, I didn't expect Cowan until the twentieth, and so on the seventeenth of June, returning from market with a good many packages, I was surprised and nervous when I saw a Rolls-Royce parked in the drive.

Dash was sitting in the living room. Before I spoke he put up a warning hand and pointed outside to the terrace. The local chief of police was there watching a figure in the distance running up and down the beach.

"What's happened? Cowan was coming in a few days. I forgot to tell you . . ."

Dash said, "He came in here all done up in a motorcycle helmet, carrying a gun. He pointed the gun at me and said, 'Put 'em up, sir, and hand over the jewelry.' It didn't worry me because I know a toy gun when I see it, but it worries the police because he did the same thing at the gas station where they don't know a toy gun."

Dash was a good-natured man, but in the last, bad, suffering years almost anything was too much for him.

I said, "Sorry. What should I do?"

"Cowan is down on the beach doing push-ups or something. Go upstairs and bring down the toy gun."

When I came back with it—it was sitting on top of the collected works of Yeats—Hammett went out to the terrace and from the window I could see him and the police chief looking at the gun and speaking words I couldn't hear. The policeman took the gun, waved at me through the window, and climbed the steps to his car.

Hammett went to his end of the house and I followed him up the stairs, bracing myself against the fall I always thought he would have. He put himself on the bed and stared at me as he always did when the years had done nothing to convince him that he knew much about me.

I said, "I didn't know he was coming today."

He closed his eyes. I said, "Is something the matter? Can I get you something?"

"No. I'm just thinking that for the first time in my life I've met a crazy man who is pretending that he is crazy and wondering why you never see danger. Maybe it's what saves you. Let me know when he leaves."

Arthur stayed for three days. He never asked about Hammett, Hammett never asked about him. On the last day of the visit, we took a picnic lunch to an ocean beach. After he had done his push-ups, taken his mile run, we had a nice day, full of disconnected talk about people and places, an occasional passing reference to Lady Sarah. On the ride home Arthur fished out a folded check from the glove compartment. It was made out to me for ten thousand dollars.

"What's this about?"

"It's not a birthday present. You earned it. Remember the Soloway case, the lawsuit I told you about? You said maybe I should just tell the truth because I'd get anything else mixed up."

He laughed with pleasure at the memory and I tried to remember which of the many lawsuits was called Soloway. "Well, only a first-rate shyster mind like yours could have thought that up. I won the case and that's your part. You'll need it when I die."

"Are you going to die again?"

"You're not to ask questions because they've forbidden me to answer."

"They?"

"Yes, this time, *they*. I have taken an important job with the government and an oath not to reveal what it's about. I am telling you that much because my travels may seem odd to you from now on."

"Odder than usual?"

"Odder than usual. That's why I want you to have the check. If I am killed, of course, there will be more for you, the securities at Barclays Bank."

I waited until that night, always his choice for driving because he could reach higher speeds, and put his check in the glove compartment of his car. As he came up the steps with his bags and got into his car, I said, "I don't like CIA spy stuff any-

where, Arthur, and I am too old to waste time talking about how such people are needed, I guess, in every country. I don't ever want another fight with you, so this will be the last time . . ."

He said, quietly, "Mark Howe said the same thing a few days ago. He believed that I don't lie. Do you?"

"Yes."

"I don't work for the CIA. I never even heard about them until Mark explained. I don't like people who spy on other people either. It's not the CIA I am working for and I swear to it. But I owe you and Mark the truth. My new bosses did question me about both of you. I said you were about as radical as rice and Mark was the most distinguished man at Harvard and if I had to listen to one word against either of you, then to hell with the whole thing. They're gentlemen, my new bosses, and they apologized."

I said I was glad they were gentlemen and then, somehow touched, I said I didn't have to know what foolishness he was up to and I didn't want to part with him ever.

He said, "We're never going to part. I always knew that," and the car roared out of the driveway.

I telephoned Mark the next morning and asked him who he thought "they" were. He said he didn't know, couldn't believe the job was of any importance because he was going on the assumption that nobody with any sense would allow Arthur to make decisions, except in the field of law, and he wasn't even sure about that.

About a year later, on the opening night of Simone Signoret's production of *The Little Foxes* in Paris, I made the guess that the job had something to do with the Common Market, although there was never anything to prove that true. Arthur had ordered twenty tickets for the opening night and was sitting next to Jean Monnet, who in the few minutes I spoke to him after the play told me that he found Arthur "a brilliant financier" and so did "other countries." I was too sad about the evening to ask the questions that probably wouldn't have been answered anyway. I wanted only to get out of the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt.

I had arrived for the last two weeks of rehearsals. Arthur met me at Orly Airport and we had a good evening. His love of Paris was always a pleasant thing to watch, but it was the last good evening I was to have until I left Paris the day after the opening of the play.

Much in the theater always goes wrong (it's as if from the beginning it was intended that way), but I had never before seen so much go bad so early: it was an awkward, too literal translation of the play; it was in a theater meant for a pageant or an

ice show; the set, which was intended only to show the middle-class indifference of a woman who had all her life been on her way to another house, was cluttered and decorated with the largest and most demanding objects I had ever seen on a stage; and the Texas sombreros chosen for Alabama bankers became a large and dangerous argument between Simone and me when, of course, they were only a small symbol of our irritation with each other.

Simone Signoret is an intelligent, charming woman, as remarkable in front of a camera as she is bewildered by a stage. Not knowing much makes many people in the theater turn natural sense and humility into nonsense and pretense. It is understandable, it is sad, but it is also difficult and tiresome. And I am often no good with actors or directors. I do not speak when I should, speak out when I shouldn't; I praise in order to hide complaints and that is recognized; and my manners grow excessively good to hide anger that can't be hidden. And I thus offend more than if I had had an open fight.

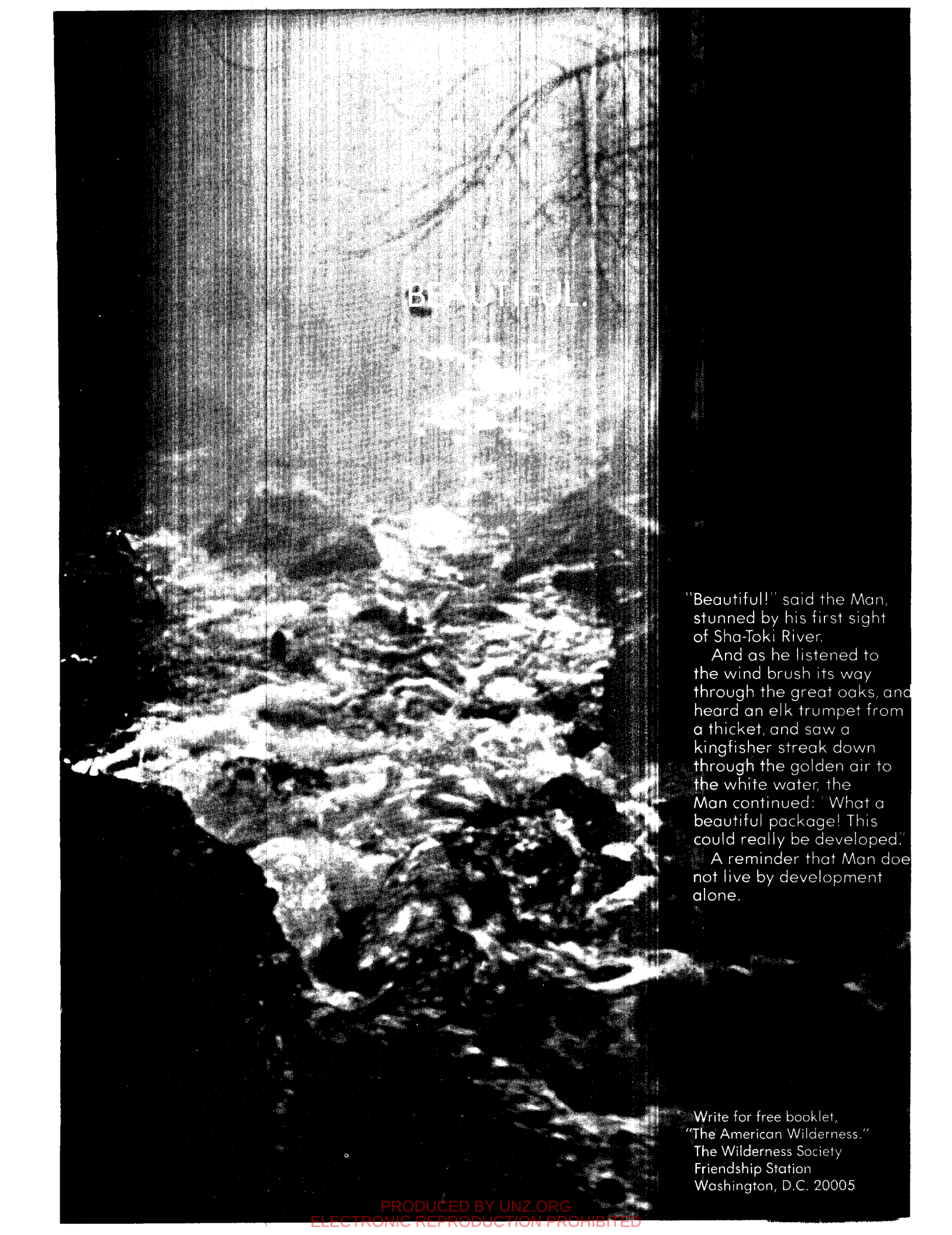
Every evening, after rehearsals, Arthur came to the theater to take me to dinner, bewildered, he told me later, at a side of me he had never seen before. I would sit silent, unable to eat the good food, drinking too much of the wine, smiling at the wrong places in his complicated stories, shaking my head when I should have laughed. The night before the official opening his patience was coming to an end: why did I worry about an old play when he had made me enough money to live well for the next few years? Why did I make faces about his newest diet, buttermilk with melted butter and cheese? Did I want to see a picture of Lady Sarah in a sable coat he had bought her? Why was there a copy of Büchner on my bed table when I knew how he hated Germans? Had I read *Candy* in the French edition he had given me? I must tell him immediately what I thought of *Candy*. There was justice in his impatience, but the questions were provocative. I was tired and so, trying not to answer him, I wrote on the back of the menu, "Arthur is a man of unnecessary things. That's sad, but there's no cure. Did I make that up or have I read it?"

He said, "I've asked you three times. What do you think of *Candy*?"

"A nasty way to make a buck." And waited for the trouble.

I don't think he heard me because he said, "Roscoe Pound saved me. At the end of my first year in Harvard Law School I didn't have enough money to come back for the second. Pound called me in and said he'd find the money for me to get through. That was before I married the tennis player whose family had never read a book. They wouldn't have liked *Candy*, either. The ignorant bastards."

"OK, Arthur, I see what's coming."



BEAUTIFUL.

"Beautiful!" said the Man, stunned by his first sight of Sha-Toki River.

And as he listened to the wind brush its way through the great oaks, and heard an elk trumpet from a thicket, and saw a kingfisher streak down through the golden air to the white water, the Man continued: "What a beautiful package! This could really be developed."

A reminder that Man does not live by development alone.

Write for free booklet,
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The Wilderness Society
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"I only started out to say I have been faithful to you in my fashion, Cynara, you and the Harvard Law School, and not much else." (As I write these words I would not believe them, but I have a letter, written about a week later, in which they are repeated exactly as they came that night.) "I get tired of other women."

"What's happened to Lady Sarah and the marriage?"

"So Pound got the law school to make me the loan and when he called me in to tell me I could stay, well, I can't tell you . . . Anyway, I cried so hard afterward that I hit a guy in the cafeteria who asked me why my eyes were red. When I die, I will take good care of my sister, I hate the rest of my family, but I'll leave her enough so she can support them, and then the rest is for the Harvard Law School and you."

I said, "Why don't you do things while you're alive and then not so many people would look forward to your death, which may be the longest in history?"

"OK," he said, "I'll buy you a house."

"I have a house."

"Then you'll have two houses. You're no problem, but what should I do for the Harvard Law School?"

I started to say fuck the Harvard Law School, I've got other problems, but I said, without interest, "Maybe a scholarship as a thank you to Pound?"

He got to his feet, pulled me up, embraced me until I lost my breath. "Wonderful. When it comes to the clinches, you're not such an ass. That's just what I'll do. Now stop being so sad about *Foxes*, I promise you I am never going to marry Lady Sarah."

A few months later he told me something about the scholarship and I think he remembered to tell me because we were on our way to dine with Ben Kaplan, a member of the Harvard Law faculty. Arthur was in a gay, charming good humor that night—he liked lawyer academics, respected them—until a man sitting next to him spoke of Goethe. Then one of the storms that came across the ocean of his years broke with tornado force, more out of control than I had ever seen before, without sense or reason, from depths so unknown and frightening that even these strangers turned aside in pity or embarrassment. Arthur was shouting to a silent table that Goethe was an old German ass, like all Germans, past and present. Then a woman, maybe the bravest or the silliest, asked about Bach and Beethoven and I knew immediately that would make things worse because Arthur didn't like women to speak when he was angry, maybe because middle- and upper-class men had convinced him against his will that women shouldn't be shouted at or knocked to the

floor. He suddenly grew dangerously quiet as he told her that nobody was sure Bach and Beethoven were Germans, and anyway they were musicians and what did that have to do with thinking?

I was, as I had been many times before, torn with shame that he was my friend and a strong desire not to deny or desert him. So I made the wrong, nervous remark: I said it all came back to Arthur's never having forgiven the Germans for producing Karl Marx. The quiet tone was gone again: Arthur told the table that my ancestors were German, that I had, therefore, inherited the national villainies, that my grandmother's name was Marx and therefore I was related to Karl Marx, and was even numbskull enough to like Heine. Still mistakenly intent on diverting him—it sometimes could be done and then he was grateful for the extended hand—I said that I had always liked Heine's remark that when the Germans made a revolution they would first have to ask permission. Arthur shouted at me that even I should know that Heine meant the *Nazi* revolution because Heine was an early Nazi and he wouldn't any longer sit at a table with me or anybody else who had an ounce of German blood.

It was that night, at that table, as I watched him leave the Kaplan house and move down toward the beach, that I knew something had gone wrong with Arthur, now forever: the inside lines that hold most of us together had slackened or broken and bad trouble was ahead. The early deprivations, the lost belief that money solved the problems of his life, the wild traveling about, the women, perhaps even the mysterious new job, maybe all of it or only some, certainly much I didn't know about, had made the life into a line on a fishing reel that tangled and couldn't be untangled, held by a hand that didn't have the sense or the courage to cut the line and tie it together in another place. But I had to cut the line of me where it crossed and tangled with his, and that night I did it, although, I am glad to say, he never knew it happened.

I was not angry that night, I was never to be angry with him again. It was no longer possible to pay him the compliment of anger, and I think he knew it and was worried about it. We saw less of each other, but in that next year and a half I had more affectionate letters than ever before, and once he arrived late at night, directly off a European plane, with a charming gold pin, and once he told me he had used the securities in my name at Barclays Bank but not to worry because he had increased my inheritance in his will, and once he told me that I was his best friend and that he loved me, and a number of times we had pleasant evenings and he became, for the first time, almost a suitor, as if he was looking for the affection he felt he had lost. He had not lost it. The truth was more important to us both: he had become to me a man of unnecessary things and often I felt that

he knew what he was, was gallant about the pain it caused him, and tried to hide it from himself with new cars, new houses, new friends, new women half forgotten at the minute they were half loved, new faces for himself, teeth set and reset, even new writers, here and in France, subsidized too long for their always shabby talents, new banks, new stocks, a new city or village or ocean that he liked so much one year and disliked so much the next.

The last time I ever saw him was an August week he came to stay with me in Martha's Vineyard. An old friend of mine was there, he liked her, and the three of us had a pleasant time. We raced to many beaches in his newest Rolls-Royce, the old having been bought a year before, we walked, we climbed cliffs where he would be waiting for me at the top to say that even if I was six years older than he I was still in bad shape, and he would prove that further by running down the cliff and for a mile stretch on the beach, the fine powerful body no heavier, he said, than when he had been young. And for once there were no boring lectures about new diets: he ate the delicious stuff that Helen cooked and kissed her after each meal.

I said to her, "Mr. Cowan looks fine, doesn't he?"

She stared at me and fished out of her pocket a piece of paper. It read, "Before I fly tonight to Paris, Air France, Flight 972, I wish to bequeath to Helen Henderson in case of my demise the sum of ten thousand dollars in repayment for her kindness during these years."

I laughed. "He does that often, with all the ladies he likes."

"It's not nice," she said.

A few hours later, Helen and I walked with him as he carried his luggage to the car. I said, "Have a good trip."

Behind me, Helen said, "It's not nice, this piece of paper about the money."

I said, "Oh, what difference does it make?"

He kissed us both, said something about coming to visit his new apartment in Torremolinos about which I had not previously heard, and started the engine. I don't think he heard Helen say, "Drive slow, Mr. Cowan. Pray the summons back."

On November 11, 1964, I came into a hotel in Mexico City to hear myself paged. The voice said that Cowan was dead, killed instantly when the Rolls-Royce was smashed in Seville. But the accident was not in Seville and he had not died instantly and he had not been driving the Rolls-Royce. No will was ever found, but Lady Sarah and the pretty lady from the Philadelphia party of so long ago came up with old letters, almost exactly like Helen's, and collected large sums of

money. In time, I asked Helen if she didn't want to present her note for collection, the going was good, and for a while she pretended not to know what I was talking about. Then one day she told me she had torn up the note as we stood saying good-bye to him that last day at the car door.

The conflicting details of the accident, why a will disappeared that he certainly wrote and rewrote through the years, the failure even to find out what job he had been doing for what agency, all are to this day unexplained. If his life was puzzling, he entrusted the memory of it to people who have kept it that way. He has disappeared. I do not believe he would have wanted it that way. And he was not six years younger than I, he was two years older, and there was a girl with him when he died. She was unharmed in the accident, she was nineteen years old, and she was German. □

A LANGUAGE I NEVER LEARNED

There is a flat street
where the rain falls
and no puddles form.

Hosts of men
with broken noses
sit at cafés,

speaking a language
I never learned.
It is not the language

of men.
They smile at the women
whom they cannot smell.

The moon, caught
for a split second
by a single raindrop,

breaks into countless pieces
countless times, still
it is always the moon.

by Mark Rudman



SPEED, SEX, AND HEROES

Seven days and nights at the Daytona 500

by William McIlwain

"In an automated society, there's little that a man can do to vent his hostilities. What can he do—kick the machine? Stock car fans feel that they have little control over what's happening to them. They want to identify with Richard Petty, who has *complete* control."

Daytona Beach, Florida

It is nearly midnight, hurting-cold, bonfires streaking the darkness for two and a half miles, and farm pickup trucks, U-Haul vans, family automobiles, wreckers, growling jacked-up street racers, converted school buses, motorcycles, and a magnificent black hearse pour through the tunnel into the infield of the Daytona International Speedway, jamming side by side to park in the grass. Rock music, raunchy and joyous, covers the night, louder than the country laments ("Sugar, don't never leave me again") coming from the pickup trucks. In the back of an EZ Haul truck, two stereo speakers are set up near the tailgate and eight teen-agers are dancing, a red-haired boy and a striking dark-haired girl driving their hips at each other, the crowd of kids on the ground shouting, and older men, admiring or leching, perhaps

both, move nearer the truck, a few of them trying to pick up the beat, staggering with their beer and whooping, "Oooooooooee! Oooooooooooooee!" And the cars and trucks arrive all night long.

Where are the sociologists and the psychiatrists when we need them? I can give you only the straightforward facts: It is dark and cold, still thirteen hours before the start of the Daytona 500, the biggest stock car race in the world. It will be attended by 103,800 persons and it offers \$236,325 in prize money. The qualifying record, set three years ago by Cale Yarborough in a Mercury, is 194 mph, which will suggest that these "stock" cars are not precisely like *your* stock car. The speedway occupies 455 acres, with parking for 75,000 automobiles, and has a 2.5-mile asphalt track. On this track, forty drivers will attempt to race 500 miles tomorrow. The majority of them will not finish: their garishly decaled \$20,000 to \$30,000 automobiles will fail them.

What's happening here? The liquor-drinking, God-fearing, coon-hunting, short-haired, fried-chicken-eating redneck stock car fan and his honey, pointy-breasted, fixed-up *special* for the race . . . they are going to lie down in this infield like lambs with these atheist, long-haired, bushy-bearded kids with their free-love girls wearing blue jeans and no brassieres. The old-time stock car fan is being subjected to pressures of change.

They come not only from the world in general but from his own heroes. Hell, can't he walk over by the garage and find Richard Petty standing next to his Dodge, No. 43, with sideburns down his jawbones and a big new moustache? And you don't win 148 Grand National races, boy, being no freak. The hair ain't hurt Richard. And Cale Yarborough, as good an old boy as you ever want to see from Timmonsville, South Carolina—Cale don't look half bad when you get used to it, that corn-silk hair covering *both* his ears.

As for the kids' turning out in great numbers, it is far more likely to happen at this track than, say, Bristol, Tennessee, or North Wilkesboro, North Carolina. The natives here are more understanding and the Atlantic Ocean, a diversion, is four miles east. But the biggest reason is that Daytona is a long-running spectacle, offering races of various types for three weeks before the big Daytona 500. It is an "occasion," a reason for going somewhere, taking along tape decks, speakers, a few friends, beer, and maybe a little pot to smoke. Sort of a rock festival with 500-horsepower engines.

Certainly for many fans—both young and old—the race itself is incidental. On Race Day some sunbathe on the tops of trucks; some fall asleep; some drink beer or bourbon all day and forget to watch. But for whatever reasons, more and more fans come each year—to Daytona and to big and small tracks all across the country. During 1973, more spectators in the United States will watch automobile racing than professional football or baseball or basketball. Only horse racing, with its lure of pari-mutuel betting, will have greater attendance.

Why does automobile racing, oftentimes a monotonous sport, draw such big crowds? There are a number of heavy cerebral theories, but for the moment consider that it offers speed, sex, heroes, alcohol, and adulation.

Here is what a visitor finds during the week of the Daytona 500. On Atlantic Avenue, a gaudy north-south strip that runs beside the Atlantic Ocean, motel signs read, WELCOME RACE FANS . . . WELCOME STP . . . WELCOME ABC SPORTS . . . WELCOME UNION 76. At the Silver Beach Inn, a pair of huge racing tires stand together in the lobby. Along the strip, topless dancers shake and an all-girl rock band rocks, but two of the places drawing the best crowds offer shows featuring interviews with racing drivers. A radio commercial says, "If you're not as avid a race fan as your husband, pick up some needlework at Charley's to pass away the time. Make a pit stop at Charley's." A white Cadillac "pimpmobile," down from New York, perhaps, or Atlanta, cruises the strip at 3 A.M. The movie *43—The Petty Story* is showing at the New Daytona, drawing crowds. It is a whole-

some movie, with Richard Petty playing himself, but an ad shows a girl saying, "Racing is a man-size game, Mister! You play it with busted bones and miles of scar tissue to get your RPM up!" At Mac's Famous Bar, a girl in a pink miniskirt pushes through a tough-looking crowd with trays of beer. A bed sheet hangs against the side wall and films of past 500-mile races are being projected onto it. "Petty's got him!" hollers a man. "Nah!" says another.

I should pause right here and put down some rudimentary information about stock car racing, in case you're ever in Mac's and want to strike up a conversation. First, stock cars are not to be confused with the Indianapolis 500 cars, the low, exotic, wide-wheeled racers with open cockpits. In appearance, stock cars are like the Fords, Chevrolets, Mercurys, Dodges, and Plymouths that you see everywhere. There are minor differences—no headlights or taillights, no glass in the windows; the doors are welded shut, and the interior has a single bucket seat for the driver and an elaborate crisscross of padded steel bars that keep the car from crushing him if it should hit a wall or flip over. But the lines are the same as the car you can buy from a dealer. The magnificent engines, of course, are not.

Stock car racing started in the South, and in the early days some of the top performers also dealt in moonshine whiskey. They drove the souped-up, jacked-up 1940 and 1950 Fords that screamed out of the hills at night running a hundred miles an hour, sometimes without lights, carrying their whiskey to the cities. It was natural, then, that with their great skills they took these fine automobiles to quarter-mile and half-mile dirt tracks and raced for money. As stock car racing has become "respectable"—a multimillion-dollar business—these whiskey cars are often referred to now as the "family cars" of the early racers.

The National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (always called NASCAR) was formed twenty-five years ago, and it has spread across much of the United States as a sanctioning body for races. There are several divisions of NASCAR. The tops is the Winston Cup Grand National Division, the major leagues of stock car racing. After the race here on Sunday, the second of the season, there will be twenty-nine more Winston Cup races this year, nearly every Sunday, extending as far as Michigan and California, winding up on November 4 with a 500-mile race in College Station, Texas.

There are good drivers who have raced for years and have never won a Grand National race. That gives you an idea of the fantastic dominance of the sport by folk hero Richard Petty, a hard, lean North Carolinian with a pearly grin who has won 148. For comparison, here are the figures for some other "big-name" drivers: Bobby Allison, 43;

William McIlwain is the author of the recently published *A Farewell to Alcohol*.

Bobby Isaac, 41; Cale Yarborough, 14; Buddy Baker, 7. David Pearson, a tough thirty-eight-year-old driver from Spartanburg, South Carolina, is closest to Petty; he has won 67 races. (And Pearson has been picked by a panel of "expert" writers to win Sunday's race here.)

The money in Grand National racing can be big. Bobby Allison was the top money winner last year with \$274,995; Petty was second with \$240,515. In the fifteen years that he has been racing, Petty, who is thirty-five, has won \$1,378,648—an average of nearly \$92,000 a season.

On the other hand, a run-of-the-mill driver may make \$20,000 to \$30,000 a year in prize money. And out of that must come expenses—the upkeep of his car, all of his travel costs, and the wages of mechanics, if he can afford any.

The aim, always, is to attract a high-rolling sponsor. Drivers and sponsors won't talk specifics, but it is reported that Coca-Cola is putting up \$100,000 this year for Bobby Allison to go racing in a 1973 Chevrolet with COCA-COLA emblazoned on its sides. And Petty has a hefty backer in Andy Granatelli and his oil additive, STP. But a lesser driver has to settle for a small-time sponsor, if he can find one at all. Then, by doing most of his own work and holding expenses down, he may break even for a year's hard work.

The tracks on which Grand National races are run vary in length from approximately a half-mile at Martinsville, Virginia, to 2.66 miles at Talladega, Alabama. Generally speaking, the longer the track, the greater the speed of the cars. In 1969-1970, the days of the so-called "winged cars"—those with high stabilizers on the rear end—speeds were approaching 200 miles an hour on the "super tracks" such as Daytona and Talladega. But for several reasons, including the vain hope that lesser drivers would have a better chance, NASCAR deliberately cut the speed of the cars. This was done by requiring restrictor plates on the carburetors, with different size openings for different style engines, thus limiting the amount of fuel and air the engine can receive. For that reason, the speeds Sunday will be in the 180s, rather than the 190s.

Tuesday

It is a warm, cloudless afternoon. In the vast field at the western end of the speedway, campers sunbathe, cook, work on motorcycles, and visit each other. It is much like driving into a national park and seeing license plates from all over North America and sleeping accommodations that range from two-person tents to expensive trailers.

A middle-aged couple sit under a canvas awning, warming tomato soup on a Coleman stove. Farther on, nine young men from Ohio cluster about an old white school bus and a red van, drinking beer and working on their motorcycles.

"We put in forty dollars apiece," their leader says, "and that paid for a new engine for the bus and fifteen cases of beer. All the beer's gone but we only have to put in fifteen dollars more for the whole trip—gas and more beer and all."

Their leader, who weighs 270 pounds and appears to be about twenty-four, says he likes it here because it is a friendly place. "He got in some trouble at Indy," one of the group says. "That was an accident," the leader says. "I like a quiet time. You want a beer?" What happened at Indianapolis, he explains, was that a man pushed him; he hit the man; two cops hit him; he hit the two cops; six cops put him in a straitjacket. "It was all an accident," he says. He opens another beer. "Are you going to the parties in the infield?" he asks. "Some girls told us there'll be some good ones."

At the racetrack itself fans stream in and out of the grandstands, even though there is no racing today. Drivers are on the track running practice laps, trying to wring out another mile or two of speed. Coming down the asphalt ramp from the high stands is a blond, wearing a red jersey playsuit cut like a tank bathing suit. In her left hand she carries an almost empty bottle of Beefeater gin and an almost empty bottle of Seagram's; in her right she carries a glass of gin. She is barefoot, burned pink by the sun, and walking well. A few steps behind her, not walking as well, is a barefoot man in shorts, with just the beginning of a pot belly. He is saying something to her that sounds like "Shoog."

The spectators are of all shapes, ages, and manner. Why are they here? Why will 103,800 persons sit for hours in the cold on Sunday? Says Dr. Jeremy Nahum, a Boston psychiatrist with faculty appointments at Harvard and Tufts and a broad knowledge of automobile racing, "There's a mystique about stock car racing. It evolved from something illicit [driving bootleg whiskey cars] into a popular sport. A man who was clever enough to evade the law, which was seen as an unreasonable power, would be viewed as a folk hero. The retaliatory pleasure in making a fool of a seemingly more powerful, forbidding figure had immense appeal."

"To the men at the races, the car is the personification of virility. The women are not primarily interested in machines the way the men are. It doesn't have as strong an appeal for the female psyche. The women are there more ornamentally . . . more in a decorative sense."

Dr. Richard Proctor is a psychiatrist who works right in the heart of stock car country as chairman of the department of psychiatry at Bowman Gray School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He says, "In our culture there are very few socially acceptable ways that we can ventilate our feelings of aggression and hostility. That's why someday I'm going to write a learned treatise on the therapeutic value of umpires and referees to

our society. You should have seen me at the basketball tournament last week—I was a mess, hollering at the referees. People probably said, ‘Look at that crazy psychiatrist!’ But it’s good for us.

“In an automated society, there’s little that a man can do to vent his hostilities. What can he do—kick the machine? Stock car fans feel that they have little control over what’s happening to them. They want to identify with Richard Petty, who has *complete* control. Look at Richard out there in his Dodge, controlling it, passing cars at 180 miles an hour. . . . The fan puts himself in Richard Petty’s place and it makes him feel like a man.”

Wednesday

Most of the drivers have been here for a week or ten days, working with their crews on their automobiles and running practice laps on the track. In mid-morning it is sunny, in the low seventies, and drivers are walking about the garage area, some still in street clothes, others in fireproof racing suits. A. J. Foyt, who has won the Indianapolis 500 three times and who won this race last year, stands beside his gold and red Chevrolet, joking with a mechanic who is firing a water pistol at another mechanic. Foyt races in only a few big-money stock car events; most of the season he drives an Indianapolis-type car, racing on another circuit. “This is a brand-new car,” Foyt says, “and it’s taking a while to get it right.”

Richard Petty, who is wearing navy blue pants with a slight flair, black cowboy boots, and a print shirt, has a tiny pocket knife in his right hand. He picks at a thin white line that separates the red

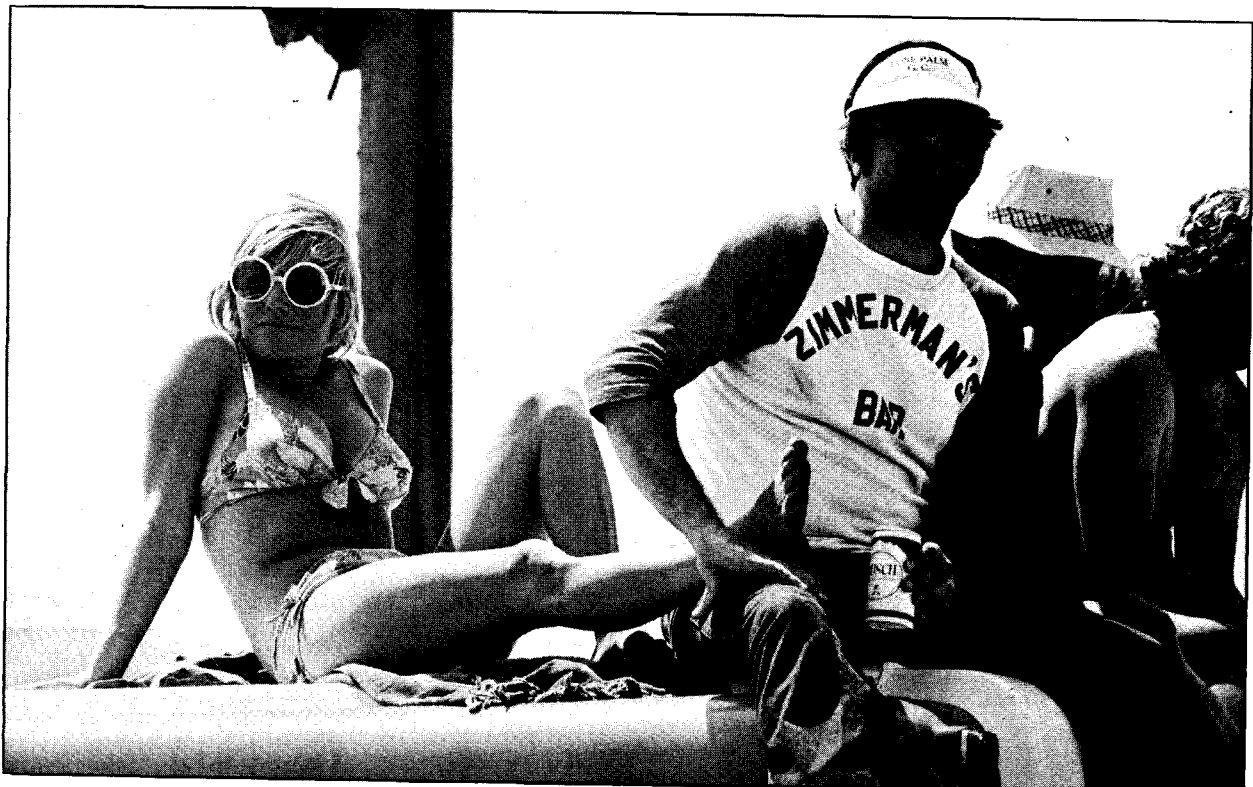
and blue of his 1973 Dodge. “The car’s not handling good,” he says. “Can’t tell what’s wrong. But we’re working on it.”

Small white letters on the left rear of Petty’s car read, MADE IN LEVEL CROSS, an inscription that, however brief, would be understood by any Southern stock car fan. His car has been put together, piece by piece, body and engine, in Petty’s pine-woods manufacturing plant, adjacent to his home in Level Cross, North Carolina. Thirty men work there, building “stock” racing cars, and one of them is Duck Holder, a mechanic who learned to make moonshine whiskey when he was fourteen. Duck is proud of the new car, which he values at \$30,000. “It’s the best car we ever built.”

Benny Parsons of Ellerbe, North Carolina, a good driver who is not nearly so well established as Foyt and Petty, has been running practice laps on the big track and he pulls his red No. 72 into the garage stall. It is booming and snorting and blasting, as all these cars do, making it seem impossible that drivers and mechanics could make themselves understood. But they can. Travis Carter, Benny’s twenty-three-year-old chief mechanic, who would like to be a driver himself, sticks his red head into the car, close to Benny’s face. He goes to the engine, does something, and Benny signals that he’s ready to go out again.

“It’s getting better,” Travis says, “but we got to get more speed. Benny’s running 178—you got to run at least 180 here.”

In the parlance of stock car racing, Parsons is neither a “hot dog” nor a “stroker.” The “hot dogs” win most of the races, driving the finest, best-maintained cars, almost always with heavy fi-



nancial backing. They ride the "high groove" (the upper part) of the banked track, dueling each other; a flagman mounted on a stand will wave at slower cars to move down nearer the track's apron to let the "hot dogs" whistle by.

The "stokers," on the other hand, drive onto the track knowing they have no chance of winning. They plug away, not extending their engines too much, and hope to finish the race. They usually pick up a little prize money each time. The etymology of "stroker" is uncertain. One mechanic explains, perhaps whimsically, that a stroker races so slowly that he can sit back comfortably, maybe in seventeenth place, and masturbate. Another mechanic says, "Well, you know, he just sits back there and strokes. Maybe it comes from piston strokes. He ain't trying to race hard, he's just stroking."

A great racing driver has to have many qualities: magnificent reflexes (at 180 mph the car directly in front of him spins), an uncanny "feel" for his car (how hard can he push it? is anything starting to go wrong?), nerve, judgment, and tremendous stamina (the temperature inside the car reaches 135 degrees on Southern tracks in mid-summer). You will hear drivers say, "I passed him and he was sitting low in the seat," meaning the man had wilted.

No racing driver can be timid, but some are known to be bolder than others. Cale Yarborough is one. "He drives a car hard," Travis Carter explains. "He'll take a chance." A member of Petty's crew concurs: "Cale tears up a lot of sheet metal out there. But you give him a car that'll run 200 and Cale will drive it 200."

Wearing a cowboy hat, dungaree pants, and sharp-toed cowboy boots, Cale Yarborough is standing beside his new Chevrolet. He is a friendly man who speaks quietly. Asked about his boldness, or courage, he says, "Oh, I don't know. I don't know whether I have any more than anybody else . . . but you won't win without it. I never set out to do anything but win in my life. I never got in a car thinking I'd finish second."

The man who owns Cale's Chevrolet, Junior Johnson, used to race exactly that way himself. Junior, who quit racing seven years ago, grew up in Wilkes County, North Carolina, which at the time produced more moonshine whiskey than any other county in the United States—and some of the finest drivers. Junior won the Daytona 500 in 1960 and he perfected a technique that has been used ever since on the long tracks—"drafting" and "sling-shotting." He found that a slower car can keep up with a fast car by getting directly behind it, almost touching it, thus escaping wind resistance. That's "drafting." At 180 to 190 mph. The object is for the slower car, at the last possible moment, to "sling-shot" past the leader and win the race.

Junior and Cale understand each other. On Sun-

day, Cale will be driving Junior's car hard. Or, as some of the stock car people like to say, "flat out, belly to the ground."

Drivers speak matter-of-factly about things that would scare you or me to death. Of a terrifying skid, they say, "I got sideways." David Pearson, talking about the weather, says, "Well, yes, it would be good if the wind dropped a little. It moves you around out there." Benny Parsons, discussing this track, concedes that it is a tough one to drive. "It feels as if you slam into each turn." He gestures, angling his hand. "It's as if you're running on a flat surface, then suddenly bang in at thirty-one degrees."

At 3:45 in the afternoon, Richard Petty comes in from running and his car goes up on four jacks. Dale Inman, his first cousin and crew chief, slides under the rear end and begins making adjustments on the suspension. "I'm trying to free it up a little," he says.

Free it up a little?

"Yeah," Dale says. "You know."

Imagine never having played bridge and looking over someone's shoulder, trying to figure out what the game is about. That's how you feel much of the time in the garage area, pondering the intricacies of stock car racing. The noise is constant, the explanations almost always esoteric and short, but offered as if they were self-evident truths.

Free it up a little?

Petty, who has pulled his lanky body headfirst through the window of the car, stretches and grins, which he does often. "Sure," he says. "You got to walk tippy-toe. You don't want it too much this way and you don't want it too much that way."

He then explains, as best he can to an outsider, how crucial it is for a car to be "set up" right—each wheel putting the proper amount of weight on the track. It determines how well the car handles at high speeds, particularly on the sharply banked turns. Drivers and mechanics talk constantly of this delicate balance, trying to strike it precisely, using expressions that are, of course, self-evident: "It's loose . . . It's pushing . . . It needs wedge . . . It's hanging out."

Petty's car, then, is handling poorly. That fact will be known by all drivers and some fans. But there are still three days until Sunday, and Petty and his crew will be working hard. Trying, you understand, to make sure that by race time the car is not *pushing* or *hanging out*.

Thursday

It is warm, with scattered clouds. A crowd of 50,350 comes out to watch a pair of 125-mile qualifying races. Buddy Baker wins the first; Co0 Co0 Marlin wins the second.

What is the significance? Fans will argue about what it foretells of Sunday's 500-mile race.

Coo Coo, forty-one, a cattle rancher from Carter's Creek, Tennessee, has never won a big race in his life. His car is fast but it may not be durable, and Coo Coo will not be regarded as a serious contender.

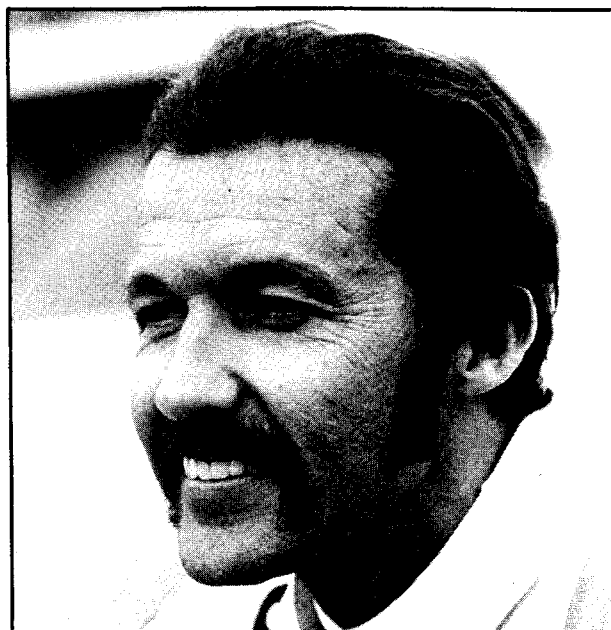
Baker, on the other hand, will be. He is a six-foot-five North Carolinian who has been racing for fourteen years and has won seven Grand National events. At the moment, even the other drivers agree that Baker's 1972 Dodge is the fastest car here. Earlier in the week he ran an official qualifying lap of 185.662 mph—more than two miles per hour faster than anyone else—and there are suspicions that he can run still faster.

In today's race, it appears that Baker is hard pressed by Cale Yarborough, but Junior Johnson says ruefully, "Nah, Baker's just playing with us. He can run faster than that."

Baker denies it: "I run just as wide open as a barn door all day."

And there are other big-name drivers to consider: David Pearson, picked by the experts to win Sunday, finished ninth today in the race won by Coo Coo Marlin. A. J. Foyt finished third in the same race. Richard Petty finished fourth in the race won by Baker.

In the next two days, while drivers and mechanics struggle for more speed, fans will drink beer and predict.



Richard Petty

think, that may be true, but laymen see it another way. "I'm gonna get me some of that," a mechanic says, nodding toward a woman beside the fence. And a college girl, who knows a fair amount about racing although she doesn't especially like it, says, "Why, you know women see those drivers as virile studs." Another mechanic supports this: "Sure, they go for the drivers. When they find out you aren't a driver, you have a harder time getting a woman."

A young woman of twenty-five, looking even younger, her dark hair in pigtails, nose peeling, has been here since Saturday and will leave Sunday night after the race, driving twenty hours to get back to her job in Michigan. It is her sixth straight year at Daytona and she travels to many other races, too. "I won't make Richmond," she says. "Maybe Bristol. I'm certainly going to Darlington." She speaks enviously of a woman her age who has taken a year off work to travel the circuit. "That's the way to do it."

What is her deep interest in racing?

"Well, I first got interested because I was going with a guy who drove down here in sixty-eight. He finished thirteenth in a Chevy. We broke up about four years ago."

Do you go with any of the drivers now?

"No. I'm just good friends with them. I love the competition and I like the guys. They're just good down-to-earth guys who like to race. It's in their blood. I know most of the drivers and mechanics and if I want to know something I can ask about it and they'll explain it to me. They don't treat me like I was some dumb broad asking a question."

In the garage stalls, which are open, enabling the fans to see the comings and goings of their heroes, the drivers and mechanics are hard at work. Maurice Petty, Richard's younger brother, who builds the engines for all of the Petty automo-

Friday

The temperature has dropped thirty degrees, portable heaters burn beside the race cars, and a young woman in turquoise hot pants and high heels stands behind the chain link fence that keeps fans out of the garage area. She must be cold. Wearing a yellow shawl and a sloppy yellow hat, she has been there at least forty-five minutes, peering at the drivers, or perhaps at one particular driver. Ten yards down the fence is a woman, a bit older, wearing black pants and a gold coat. She has been standing there even longer.

There are men, women, and children all along the fence, but some of the women stand out because you see them there every day—and most likely would see them next Sunday at the race in Richmond, Virginia, or the following race in Bristol, Tennessee. "Pit lizards," camp followers, or dedicated racing fans, whatever you choose to call them, they are part of the scene and their presence is pleasing to racing men. "Sweets, you do look good!" a pit crew member will say as he passes the fence, pulling a red wagon bearing racing gasoline.

What is the lure that draws these women to racing? Dr. Nahum says, "The woman's interest is usually not what is of interest to the man. She comes in the service of furthering her relationship with the man who is so obviously involved here." Deep down, psychiatrically speaking, deeper down than most of us

biles, is unhappy with the car. He has been all week. "Terrible," he says. "Terrible."

Richard says the same thing: "Terrible. It's still not handling good. But we've changed a whole lot of things and now we have to see if they're right."

In response to calls from his fans, Richard walks to the fence, goes through the guarded gate, and begins signing autographs. Two teen-age girls ask if he will have his picture taken with them. Looking a little fatherly, he nevertheless puts his arms around them both and flashes his great pearly grin. "Thank you, Richard! Thank you, Richard!"

For about twenty minutes, he stands outside the fence signing autographs and talking. I asked him later about spending so much time doing this.

"When you got the time, you ought to do it," he explains. "When you got a lull like this. Because sometimes when you're working on the car you've got to walk by somebody like they aren't there. So when you got the time, you take it."

Saturday

Miss Permatex of California is standing in the grass between the pits and the racetrack, turning from side to side for the photographers who have formed a ring about her. She has on a rabbit-fur cape, which is open to display her body; it is cold but she never stops smiling. A short, gnarled man with "Valvoline" on his jacket steps forward, tentatively at first, stands beside her, and a buddy snaps their picture. Miss Permatex smiles. Then another man comes forward. And another. She is smiling all the while.

Using women as billboards seems to be an inevitable part of stock car racing. Even on a half-mile track in a small town, you might find a lone country girl, a bit chunky in the thighs, doing her best, waving kisses to four thousand persons. Here, Miss Permatex has company. Union 76, which spends an estimated one million dollars a year on racing, has four of its "racestoppers," all professional models, waving and smiling. The Winston cigarette girls, in red and white, are here. And Miss Speed Weeks is reigning and beaming. And coming around the track on top of a station wagon, Miss Red Cap Ale from Canada.

During a 300-mile race, resulting in seven wrecks but no injuries, fans scatter to remote points of the infield. At the height of the action a couple lie asleep in a red and white Chevrolet. Near the west turn, four men are sitting on a platform built on top of a truck—it is possible to see the whole track from up there—and they are passing a quart of I. W. Harper back and forth. "Go, Double O!" shouts a man in a camouflaged duck-hunting suit. "Go, Double O!"

Now, that is my picture of a good old-time stock car fan: a red-faced man in a camouflaged duck-hunting suit, drinking bourbon, hollering, "Go,

Double O!" But times and the fans are changing. At 8 P.M., attending a cocktail party given by NASCAR and Pepsi-Cola, I see some of the new-breed fans. A woman in a beige, floor-length gown, her hair teased a foot high, approaches two women: "Do you know who's here? The Winchester cigar man! My God, I'm flipping over him!" Soon after, a young woman crosses the floor in an azure dress that is open at both hips, connected by gold chain, showing azure bikini pants underneath. These women will not be in the infield tomorrow with the camouflaged duck hunter. In the VIP lounges, maybe, or the \$30 grandstand seats.

Meanwhile, the lions and the lambs are lying down together tonight in the infield. At midnight, making my way through the pickup trucks, the family cars, the motorcycles, and the rented vans, I stop beside a stumpy-nosed wrecker that is filled with firewood. Three men are sitting on logs, warming themselves over a big fire. Who will win tomorrow's race? "David [Pearson], most likely," one of the men answers. "Ol' Cale could do it, too. And Richard." Buddy Baker? "Nah, he don't finish races good." What do you like about racing? "Like about it, how you mean? I like the racing."

The eight kids dancing in the back of the EZ Haul truck are pouring it on now, stereo speakers sound from various points, there is a faint smell of pot in the air, and the young and old move about with no hassles. Some, in fact, are moving about together. A man of thirty-five, sitting beside a big fire with a teen-age girl, says, "Stop and warm awhile. I'm from Birmingham; she's from Tallahassee."

The trucks and cars still pour in.

Sunday

A light rain is falling, it is scarcely daylight, and the infield is still. Here and there, behind a pickup truck or in front of a tent, an early riser puts on coffee or bacon.

Pit crews are already passing through the infield, on their way to the garage area to get ready for the race. But it is some time before last night's celebrants stir much. A young man sits on the back of a pickup truck, drinking beer and listening to a country preacher. Occasionally, a hot car growls on the dirt road—a wide-tired Camaro or a Shelby.

In fourteen years, there has never been a Daytona 500 rained out, but it appears that this one will be. It is not raining hard, but enough to make the track slippery. At 10:30, the forty drivers are called together by NASCAR for a meeting, a routine procedure. "Most of you fellows have run this track before and you know what to do," an official says. "When you're going into a turn, keep your eye on your mirror. If a fast car's coming up on you, don't try to get out of his way. Stay in the lane you're in and he'll know how to get by. But



Petty and crew during a pit stop

I'll tell you this: if you're not running 170, you don't belong in the two top grooves."

By race time, 12:30, the rain has stopped, but the track is wet. It is decided that the racers will run thirteen laps under the caution flag at about 80 mph with a pace car preceding them, in order to dry off the track. Then Buddy Baker will run a fast lap to see if it is all right. He does—at 186 mph—and they are off.

It seems that the race will be between Baker and Cale Yarborough. David Pearson, picked to win, goes out with valve trouble after 63 laps. There are 200 laps to run. Benny Parsons has trouble with oil pressure and is out at Lap 101. Coo Coe Marlin's engine fails and he's out at 118. Of the forty cars, twenty-two will fall out, eighteen will finish.

Baker and Yarborough are running right together all the while, Baker obviously faster but Cale "drafting" and hanging directly behind him. A few times Cale passes, but Baker passes him back. Richard Petty is running third, not appearing to threaten the leaders.

In the backstretch on Lap 154, Yarborough's engine flames and he is out of the race. Petty is second now, and he is gaining on Baker. Both of them go into the pits to get gasoline and new right-side tires. Their cars get about four miles to a gallon of gas and their tanks hold twenty-two gallons; thus, they must stop about every ninety miles for gas. Right-side tires get the greatest wear and drivers like to change them at each gas stop. Left-side tires need to be changed only twice during the race. Five pit men change two tires, fill the car

with gas, wash the windshield, and give the driver a soft drink in twenty seconds.

With fifteen laps to go, Petty is right behind Baker, but Baker still looks faster. Both of them must stop once more for gas, and this could be a crucial move.

On Lap 188 Richard comes in and his crew pour in only part of a can of gas. He is out in 8.4 seconds.

On Lap 189 Baker comes in. It is 10 seconds before he is out.

Petty has a lead now. With seven laps to go Baker is pushing him hard—probably too hard—and Baker's engine blows. Petty drives the remainder of the race unthreatened, finishing five miles ahead of the second man, Bobby Isaac. Dick Brooks is third and A. J. Foyt is fourth.

It is the 149th time that Richard Petty has won a Grand National race and the fourth time that he has won the Daytona 500. It is unlikely that any stock car driver will ever match those figures.

Later, in a matter-of-fact voice, Petty explains how—one way or another—he wins races: "They could outrun me a little. My boys beat Baker in the pits. We had handling problems all week. Our hope was that if we couldn't outrun them our boys could put together some good equipment that would last. We did."

It is starting to rain again and to get dark. Among the 103,800 fans, surely some do not know who won the race. Some, in fact, probably don't even know that it is over. But they have been to Daytona. For whatever their reasons, they have been to the Daytona 500. □

THE Atlantic

1972-1973-52nd ANNUAL CREATIVE WRITING CONTESTS

\$500 Scholarship awarded to Thomas Carson, McLean High School, McLean, Va., Janet S. Tienken, instructor.

SCHOOLS

Best Fiction-top five

1. Sue Waymire-Kent-Meridian High School; Kent, Wash.; Thomas Brush, instructor. 2. Chester Marvin-Phillips Exeter Academy; Exeter, N.H.; Norval Rindfleisch. 3. Douglas Owen Hughes-Trinity High School; New York, N.Y.; George Wm. Mayer, Jr. 4. Thomas Carson-McLean High School; McLean, Va.; Janet S. Tienken. 5. Karin Gustafson-National Cathedral School; Washington, D.C.; Dorothy Gove.

Best Non-Fiction-top five

1. Jean Luntz-Orange High School; Cleveland, Ohio; Grace S. Brookes, instructor. 2. Christine Reynolds-Evanston Township High School; Evanston, Ill.; Barbara Pannwitt. 3. Leslie Richardson-Westhill High School; Stamford, Conn.; Lynne S. True. 4. Andrea Pickens-Evanston Township High School; Evanston, Ill.; Barbara Pannwitt. 5. Deborah Reed-Westhill High School; Stamford, Conn.; Lynne S. True.

Best Poetry-top five

1. Vicki Stark-Thomas Jefferson High School; Denver, Colo.; William G. Meyers, instructor. 2. Jan Wachter-North Catholic High School; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Walter J. Quinn. 3. Susan Wheeler-Denton High School; Denton, Texas; Catherine Shuford. 4. Robert Friedericy-Palos Verde High School; Palos Verde, Ca.; Robert Wilton. 5. Alex Rankin-Kentucky Country Day School; Louisville, Ky.; Charles E. Fothergill.

School Fiction-honorable mention

Grace Roberti-Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Ill.; Carolyn Cain-Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Ill.; Pamela Radke-Glenbard West High School, Glen Ellyn, Ill.; Andrea Hawk-William Allen High School, Allentown, Pa.; Trip Gabriel-Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.; David Nelson-Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Ill.; Carolyn Kennedy-Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Ill.; Deborah Davis-West Philadelphia Catholic Girl's School, Philadelphia, Pa.; Kenneth Ehrlich-Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.; DeBorah J. Bryant-Ethyl Walker School, Simsbury, Conn.; John Conger-Clairemont High School, San Diego, Ca.; Susan Nathan-Castilleja School, Palo Alto, Ca.; Marco DeChiro-Walter Johnson High School, Bethesda, Md.; Susan Riedeman-Kent School, Kent, Conn.; David Barrow-Denton High School, Denton, Texas.

School Non-Fiction-honorable mention

Leslie Saunders-Westfield Senior High School, Westfield, N.J.; Amy Friedman-Shortridge High School, Indianapolis, Ind.; Terry Mahoney-Christian Brothers College High School, Clayton, Mo.; Andy Petrie-Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Travis Brown, Jr.-Saint Albans, Washington, D.C.; Gwendolyn J. Toth-Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Marilyn Rose-Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Ill.; Carolyn Tank-Rocky River High School, Rocky River, Ohio; Susan Moore-Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; M. Cory Zucker-Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; William Weinberger-Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Sue Tilberry-Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Ted Pease-Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.; Neil Viny-Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Mark A. Benson-Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio.

School Poetry-honorable mention

Andrea Pickens-Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Ill.; Stella Lopez-Rincon High School, Tucson, Arizona; Pamela Anson-Kalamazoo Central High School, Kalamazoo, Mich.; Ken Sokolski-South High School, Torrance, Ca.; James Mustich-Fordham Preparatory School, Bronx, N.Y.; Ted Pease-Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.; Teresa Perrigo-Kent-Meridian High School, Kent, Wash.; Anthony P. Robinson-Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, N.H.; James Barber-Forest Park High School, Beaumont, Texas; Ross Paulson-West Chicago Community High School, West Chicago, Ill.; Jacqui McEwen-Marple-Newton Senior High School, Newton Square, Pa.; Jean Coste-Kent School, Kent, Conn.; Karin Gustafson-National Cathedral School, Washington, D.C.; Webb Keane-Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, N.H.; Steve Elwood-Harrisburg High School, Harrisburg, Pa.

COLLEGES

Best Fiction-top five

1. Nancy Clark-Trinity College; Hartford, Conn.; Stephen Minot, instructor. 2. Virginia Hyde-Central Oregon College; Bend, Oregon; Miles Wilson. 3. Benjamin Feiler-University of Pittsburgh; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Robert A. Papinchak. 4. R.B. Woodward-Trinity College; Hartford, Conn.; Stephen Minot. 5. Deborah Morris-Trinity College; Hartford, Conn.; Stephen Minot.

Best Non-Fiction-top five

1. Sister Mary Jo Beck-Mount Saint Mary's College; Los Angeles, Ca.; Sister Mary Patricia Sexton, instructor. 2. Linda Cook-Wheaton College; Wheaton, Ill.; Helen Siml deVette. 3. Thomas Hagen-Wheaton College; Wheaton, Ill.; Helen Siml deVette. 4. Carl Basic-Youngstown State University; Youngstown, Ohio; William C. Baker. 5. Nancy Otis-Saint Lawrence University; Canton, N.Y.; Joe David Bellamy.

Best Poetry-top five

1. Jane M. Warth-College of Notre Dame of Maryland; Baltimore, Md.; Sister Ruth Miriam, instructor. 2. Casey Bush-Muskegon Community College; Muskegon, Mich.; Wilma Kyvig. 3. Judith Cody Weinmann-Foothill College; Los Altos Hills, Ca.; Richard Maxwell. 4. David T. Newcomb-Muskegon Community College; Muskegon, Mich.; Wilma Kyvig. 5. John Murphy-Saint Joseph's College; Philadelphia, Pa.; Francis F. Burch.

College Fiction-honorable mention

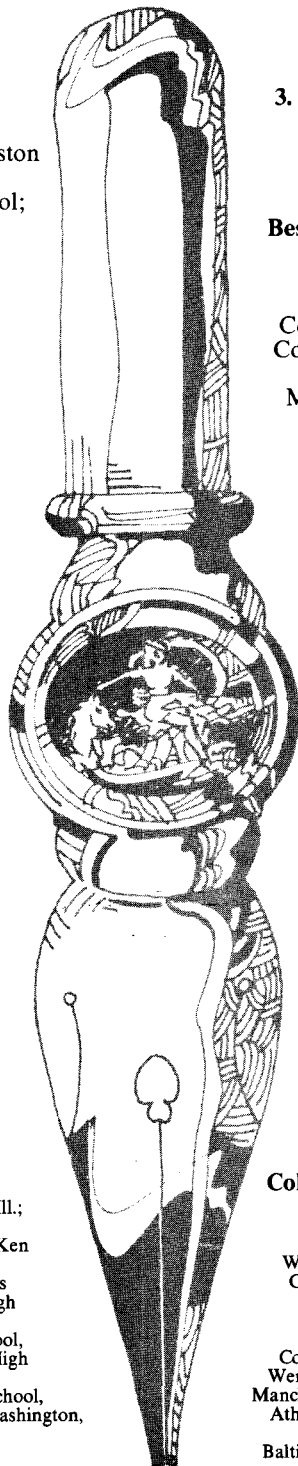
Mary Christine Wagner-California State University, San Diego, Ca.; Stephen Sorenson-Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Rex W. Peterson-Wenatchee Valley College, Wenatchee, Wash.; Jean Ann Mathews-Florissant Valley Community College, St. Louis, Mo.; Skid Millstid-University of Houston, Houston, Texas; Paul Deemer-Indiana University of Pa., Indiana, Pa.; Gordon Dillow-University of Houston, Houston, Texas; Mary Jo Matel-Trinity College, Hartford, Conn.; Linda Askren-Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; William Steinmetz-Miami University, Oxford, Ohio; Patricia A. Bodnar-Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass.; Charles Christensen-Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Richard Heerde-Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass.; DeLinda Frels-University of Houston, Houston, Texas; Carol Hall-Muskegon Community College, Muskegon, Mich.; Carol Adams-Muskegon Community College, Muskegon, Mich.

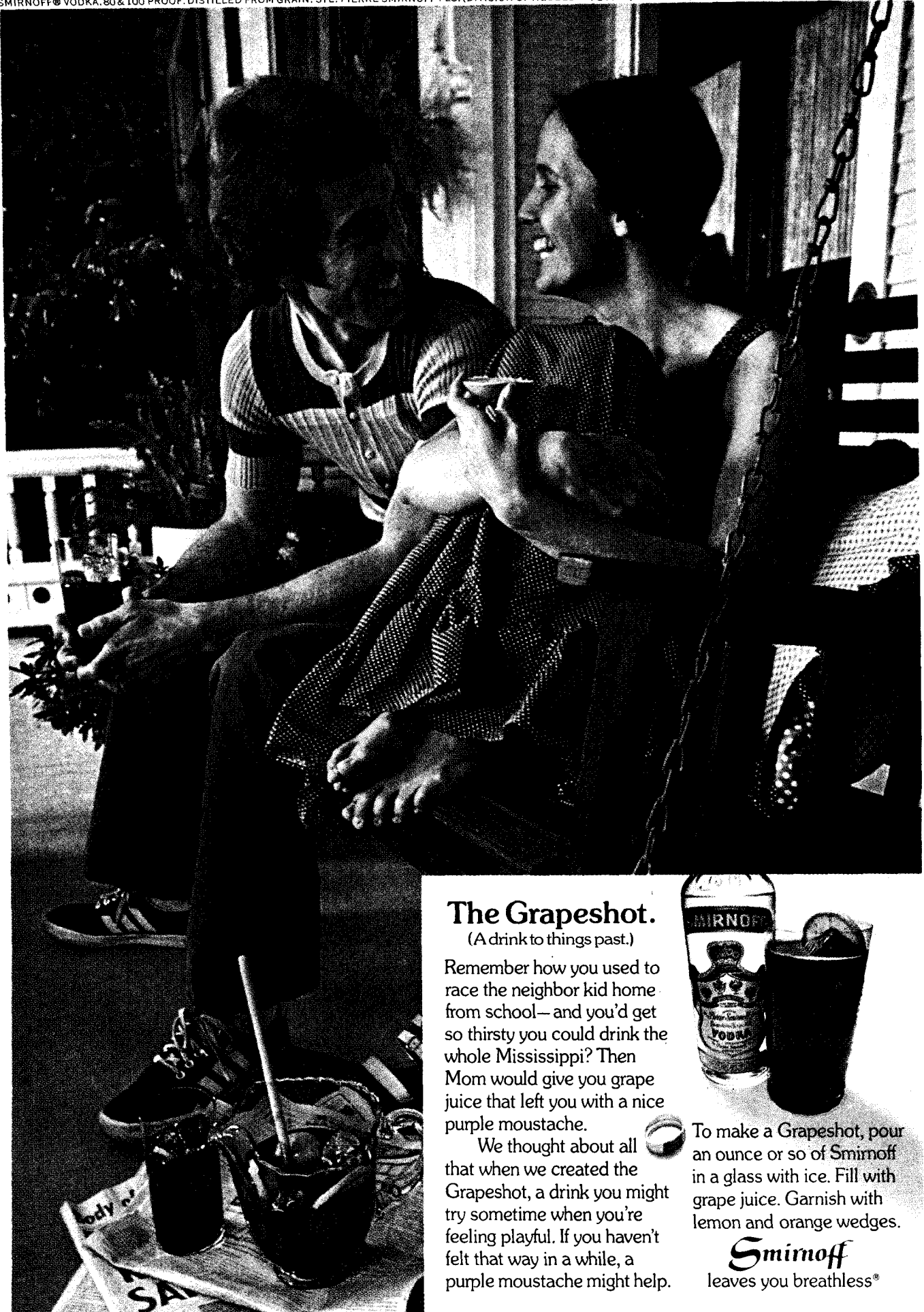
College Non-Fiction-honorable mention

Bettie Ann Morse-Eastern College, Saint David's, Pa.; Martha Jones-Eastern College, Saint David's, Pa.; Violet Brucker-Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Gail Eubanks-Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Sister Kathryn Suzanne Wright-College of Notre Dame of Maryland, Baltimore, Md.; Tom Collins-Muskegon Community College, Muskegon, Mich.; Claudia Thomas-College of Notre Dame of Maryland, Baltimore, Md.; John Nemecek-Roberts Wesleyan College, Rochester, N.Y.; John Woolmington-Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Sister Mary Christine McNamara-Mount Saint Mary's College, Los Angeles, Ca.; Michael J. Hanagan-Regis College, Denver, Colo.; Jeremy Simons-Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; Kathy Olson-Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Patrick F. Robertson-Foothill College, Los Altos Hills, Ca.; Teresa Blickhan-Regis College, Denver, Colo.

College Poetry-honorable mention

Cynthia Bennett-University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Joy Moody-College of Notre Dame, Baltimore, Md.; Deborah A. Brown-College of Notre Dame, Baltimore, Md.; Angeline Williams-College of Notre Dame, Baltimore, Md.; Terry Klein-College of Notre Dame, Baltimore, Md.; Kristin Flint-Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Stephanie Kalinich-College of Notre Dame, Baltimore, Md.; Dede Spracklin-Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; Lois Anne Wolf-Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Randy Landon-Wenatchee Valley School, Wenatchee, Wash.; Christa Kolster-Manchester College, North Manchester, Ind.; Neva Gladish-Academy of the New Church, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; Gary Will-Muskegon Community College, Muskegon, Mich.; Sister Barbara Ann Reigle-College of Notre Dame, Baltimore, Md.; Jennifer Lee Pater-Carlton College, Pittsburg, Pa.





The Grapeshot.

(A drink to things past.)

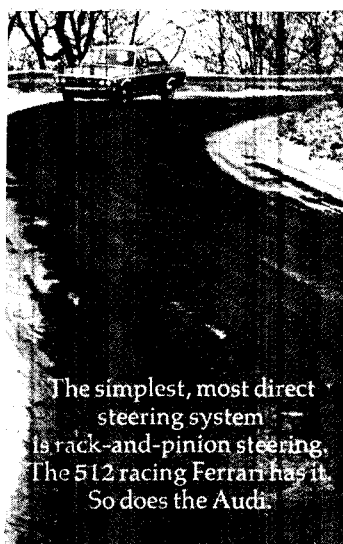
Remember how you used to race the neighbor kid home from school—and you'd get so thirsty you could drink the whole Mississippi? Then Mom would give you grape juice that left you with a nice purple moustache.

We thought about all that when we created the Grapeshot, a drink you might try sometime when you're feeling playful. If you haven't felt that way in a while, a purple moustache might help.

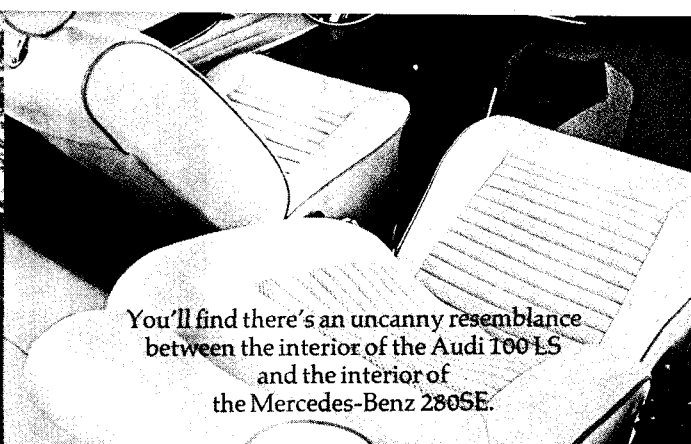


To make a Grapeshot, pour an ounce or so of Smirnoff in a glass with ice. Fill with grape juice. Garnish with lemon and orange wedges.

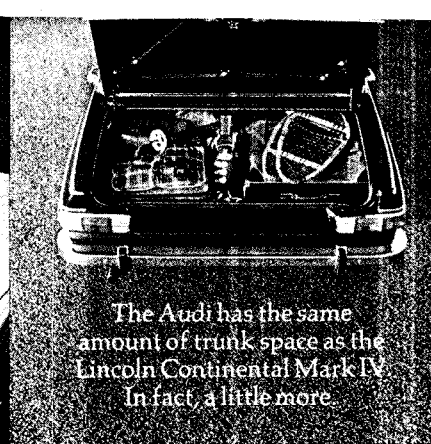
Smirnoff
leaves you breathless®



The simplest, most direct steering system is rack-and-pinion steering. The 512 racing Ferrari has it. So does the Audi.



You'll find there's an uncanny resemblance between the interior of the Audi 100LS and the interior of the Mercedes-Benz 280SE.

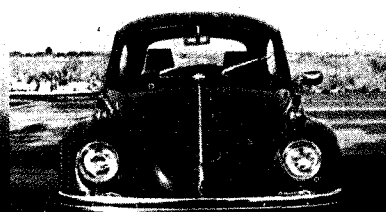


The Audi has the same amount of trunk space as the Lincoln Continental Mark IV. In fact, a little more.

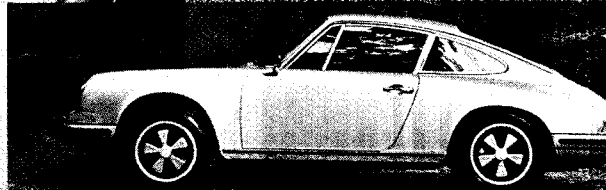


Both the Cadillac Eldorado and the Audi have front-wheel drive. But we had it first.

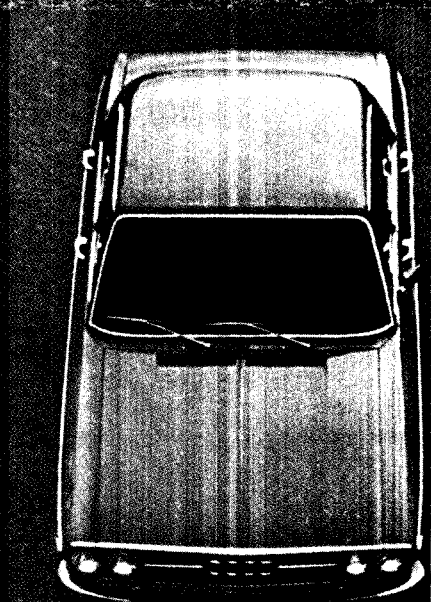
Don't let the size of the Audi on the outside fool you about the size on the inside. It has just about the same headroom and legroom as the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow.



The Audi gets the same expert service as a Volkswagen. Because it's part of the VW organization.



We've got the same type of dependable ignition system as the Porsche 911.



The Aston Martin has independent front suspension. So does the Audi.

The Audi®
It's a lot of cars for the money.

8 cars. \$4,260.

Suggested retail price East Coast P.O.E. for 100LS \$4,260. Leatherette upholstery optional, at extra cost. West Coast P.O.E. slightly higher. Local taxes and other dealer delivery charges, if any, additional.

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CATHOLICISM PAST

by Ned O'Gorman

"In this new Church, everything becomes, very quickly, very dull. There are no processions, no incense, no sin, no candles . . ."



began to think of poetry, the Church took up its stride beside me.

I know the Church has wounded many of my friends, my sisters and my parents, for it is not easy to escape the often brutal fancy of her moral arrogance. She acts sometimes like an angry lover when she observes her beloved swerving toward freedom or his own fancy and stomps on him, body and soul, to keep him in her sway. She has laid waste the joy in priests and nuns and has forced the spirit of men and women into the void by insisting that sexuality and marriage are some kind of divine task with no purpose but the begetting of children. She has allowed the bright, animal graces of the Lord's son to become a sordid fortress for her power, art, music, literature, and moral, political, and financial survival. The style of much of modern life has been maimed by her cowardly fear of the Gospel. The New Testament is the only text of modern times that cannot be

It was always there. I cannot remember a moment in my life when I did not know its presence about me. It was alpha and omega from the start. In the midst of the greatest delights, in the collapsing world of my family and in the rich new world that brushed my spirit when I was a boy and

judged in any word or idea vulgar or ordinary, but it has become in the hands of the embattled Church the source of political, theological, aesthetic, and philosophical vulgarity, clichés, and moral idiocy. But like all great myths, no matter how cruel the New Testament readers might be in their uses of the Lord, the style of Christ disturbs the dust and ruins of their ravishing. As I look with horror on the Church lunging away from the Lord and the Gospels, its hero, Christ Jesus, stands always triumphant, wittily benevolent and luminous with glory and life.

I have not been hurt by the Church, nor have my dreams, my poetry, my heart, or my freedom. I have perhaps suffered too much in my wildest self, that part of me undifferentiated and savage that is the source of my poetry and my salvation, from certain foolish, and dangerous, Roman Catholic theories of the imagination, sexuality, and history. The tyrannical Church and the ominous presence in my blood of the Irish, the Italians, the French, and New England Puritans have caused me unpleasant moments. But then I have suffered no less from my country in her dementia, from the schools, from my diet, and from my blighted fallen spirit.

The Church was brought to me first by my grandmothers, Caroline Mississippi Hudson Snyder O'Gorman and the Marquise de Bouthillier-Chavigny.

One summer day in Old Lyme, Connecticut, Grandmother O'Gorman told me that I was spiritually sluggish and that since I was even a sluggard at shelling peas (the task she set me that morning), she would disinherit me. She was stern, mightily certain of herself and given to a stylish arrogance and hardness of sympathy that was Roman Catholic at its core, being inhospitable to shades of moral weakness and obsessed with sin and order. Grandmother and her brothers and sisters were converted one night on the spot from the most upright of Episcopal rigors. Her puritanical

fidgets and her Roman wiles were marvels to me of man at his oddest, and though she frightened me, I cannot blame her for any troubles I may have had with this world; she gave me a rudimentary sense of good manners and uprightness, a feeling for the difficulties of bearing oneself nobly through life, and for those lessons in behavior I will always bless her. She was displeased with freedom, with the idea that perhaps someday the ropes that held back the barbarians might give way and the world would be flooded with flotsam. She had not much truck with the imagination and was not in a fiber of her being frivolous or given to humor. I never remember her laughing. Her displeasure at the possibility of the secret self hidden in man made it hard for me to get used to my angularity of spirit. She floated through my life dressed either in black or white, one strand of pearls about her throat, her hair in white coils, peering at me over her glasses as if I might any minute commit some shattering obscenity. (Once I said "damn" and she washed my mouth out with soap and water; I thought I would choke to death. I still can smell, in moments of terror, the soap as it clogged my nose and inched into my throat when she pushed my head into the sink. I thought I'd die.) But in the bizarre captivity of my family, as I first knew it in my grandmothers' power over me and in their horror at the caprices of history, I grew accustomed to chaos and the wilder reaches of my soul.

The Marquise de Bouthillier-Chavigny on the other end of that seesaw of my childhood, swathed in black, cascades of linen and tulle falling from a mourning cap where a sapphire and diamond half-moon glowered at the peak, took up another guardianship of my life, and like Grandmother O'Gorman, that guardianship was terrifying and romantic. She was in perpetual grief for her husband, who died when he was young during a lecture on French history at Harvard. She always seemed on the verge of judgment. I wandered around her apartment, where the debris of her past had been gathered into rooms lit, it always seemed to me, by the glow of a red bulb that hung from the hall ceiling. On the walls were the castles of my mother's family surrounded by moats filled with black water reflecting woods, skies, and turrets, the domains of imperial splendors I inhabited with the most baroque birds, knights, flowers, and fruits of my imagination.

Her house was a silent eyrie of noble French ghosts and piety. The Marquise sat in her great armchair as if the world beyond her, a world of markets, cars, electric lights, children, and time, simply did not exist or if it did and she knew about it, it did not matter at all. Six etchings in

the hall depicted in relentless moral sternness the life of one of her kin, the Abbé de Rance who reformed La Trappe in the seventeenth century. In each he was in some *extremis* of agony, the cold will of his piety preaching out to the monks who surrounded him like a whip of thorns. I was drawn to those pictures, for they were morbid and regal, religious and abandoned at the same time, with a fervor of intent that trapped my nerves quite ruthlessly. Beneath them, on a shelf I touched when no one was watching me, was a bit of stone Grandfather de Bouthillier had taken from a catacomb in Rome. On the shiny green surface some martyr (I imagined) had carved a dove holding a laurel leaf in its beak. On the tables in her room were rosary beads, jars of holy water, shriveled palm branches, and holy cards of saints with names of dead friends and relatives printed on the backs.

There were glittering clumps of grandeur and signs of the past everywhere: a lovely oil painting of my great-grandmother when she was young hanging in an oval golden frame, dressed in green velvet with the faintest sprint of a jeweled ribbon cutting through enormous sleeves; two wrought-iron candlesticks with ferns, nymphs, and garlands of roses at the base; cut-glass bowls with the family crest drawn in the loveliest thin tracery as if the glass cutter had breathed ice into them; and of all the treasures I loved most, a watercolor of my great-grandfather rocking away on his rocking horse when he was five in a fanciful landscape of trees and flowers, a creature of the intensest fairy kind. On her dressing table there was an ivory box. I knocked it over one day and from it fell an emerald and diamond ring, a string of pearls, and that sapphire and diamond half-moon.



he Church and my family never sundered me from the hero and the poet that inhabited my fragile, stammering self. Those inner moons and suns that drive me about so erratically were not thrown off balance by the tremendous atmosphere of a Church in the midst of revolutionary change. Then,

in the 1930s, the Church tolerated my temper and my terrible biases; today it would be forced by the trends toward the total explanation of all mystery to study them. She let me wander through my house and the lovely hills beyond it dragging my imagination and all its anguish and glee with me;

Ned O'Gorman's collections of poetry include *The Night of the Hammer*, *The Buzzard and the Peacock*, and *The Flag the Hawk Flies*.

today she would come with the cool scissors of psychology and try to trim me down to size. I jolted into life as the Church hummed and whispered to me the secrets of the Trinity, grace, prayer, guilt, sin, eternity, and the *tremendum causa* of the Lord's presence on this earth.

Our house was on Southport harbor; to the east, beyond Sasco Hill, Long Island Sound; and behind us, Taintor's Hill. The salt in the air, the smell of fish and flowers, the sound of the wind coming in over the fields from the Sound, the violets, stone walls with clumps of fool's gold set into the grim, gray New England rock (I chipped it away and stored it in glass jars in the stables), frogs, ice ponds, and the dark alleys of pines became the haunted, sacred fabric of my childhood where I found my way into the world and into the presence of the Lord and His Church. (I remember one day as I wandered through the hills that the local butcher appeared and went into a grove of willows with a girl in tow: I snuck up a tree to spy on them and saw him take down his pants and lie on top of her. It scared me so that I stayed far away from that part of Taintor's Hill for months.)

My family was not religious. Religion, Church, the pieties my friends who grew up in those days seemed to have suffered under did not touch my life. I remember the classic pieties of my grandmothers: fear of the Lord, awareness of sin in everything and everyone, the immanence of eternity, the contagion in the common style in manners and piety. I remember the suffering of my parents: raw, unmediated by psychology, given certain moments of splendor by their beauty and their sense of what was "right." I remember the natural world: the water, the hills, our gardener planting bulbs and setting straight, in spring, the garden paths, my father's horse in its paddock, the flowering of the lilacs, the first sailing of Mr. Lacey's boat down the harbor, in April, for a short sail in the sea. (The Sound was ocean to me, the habitation of sharks and whales. It did not occur to me that it was the mildest of waters harboring nary a wild beast at all.)

My grandmothers were around me like witches—benign, heraldic, wicked in their stern affections, ancient in their dress and manner, and hanging on to the end of an era when everything they knew was mocked and what was mocked was becoming the new style. Gentlemen were the deviants; silence, reticence, proper table manners, acceptable friends, correct marriages were things one burlesqued and soon would be decreed vestigial. Right was no longer right; right might be wrong and wrong might turn, overnight, right. All was not orderly if one simply accepted the fate of one's class and one's past; order was in the mobs now and in the streets and it was hard for my grandparents to remember a time when some sacred notion, now trifled with and scorned, was honored. Order was

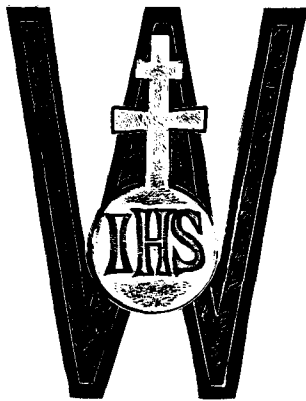
no longer *there* where it had always been. Suddenly it could not be summoned up. My grandparents and my parents and all their kin never doubted that there was a heaven, that there was hell—and that there *were* sinners in it. Sin was real then, not a mere quirk in the nervous system. It did matter to them who one slept with. Vows were to be kept no matter how one suffered keeping them. But marriage and the family honor were slipping into the shadows as ideas sacred enough to enshrine in one's life with homage; it didn't matter, it seemed to them as they observed the world, what one did; sin was no more than a glass of wine spilt on a rug at a dinner party. One simply said "Sorry" and walked on. For my family when I was a boy, there was no question to be asked about the Church; it was there and it would be forever.

I learned to love the world amidst the whimsical conjunction of the old world at its end and the new world of the Church and its war with modern life at its beginning. I am glad I was not born at that time when I would have had to learn of the Church under the sun-shadow of the Second Vatican Council and totally liberated universe. It would have been a little for me like learning to love music through Wagner. There was still then style enough left over from the past to enable me to worship the Lord, fear Him, adore the world, honor my parents, delight in the day, keep chaste, and yet wonder continually about what a glorious, bountiful, tragic, sensuous thing life was.

The world and the Church had not yet succumbed to banal language, marketplace liturgies, dread of transcendence, and a general agreement among all the enlightened that mystery, glory, holiness, elegance, eternity, and judgment are evil words transmitted with evil intent by neurotic saints and even more neurotic churches, the Roman Church the worst of the demons. We must suffer now with mock celebrations, the disappearance of incense, Latin, vestments, theology in sermons (theology replaced by politics or social consciousness is a bore as well as dangerous meddling and bad teaching), and "religious" priests and nuns. I am delighted with much that has gone but I am not delighted with the wasteland that has taken its place. My childhood's Church was no wasteland. The Church was a monolith, and that was bad, but it was not a monolith that threatened, judged, wounded, or led me into vulgarity. She was priest-ridden, I know, and the nuns were rather dull-witted most times, and the sermons were mere lessons in hell and sin, but through all the clumsiness and bad history and style there ran bright with mystery the riddle of the Lord and the Incarnation.

I was free then to take things *unseriously*. When my Aunt Gilberte told me that it was a mortal sin not to say my prayers on my knees, I didn't worry

at all and continued to say them in bed. The Church was no central, eccentric spy peering down my throat to catch each errant murmur of my heart. The Lord was there, lambent and generous, human and divine, trying to free Himself from the Church that had too tight a grasp on His freedom and yet in her fumbling care of His word had built in the world a triumphant witness to the mystery of the Incarnation. And of all things I learned when I was a boy, I learned soon how lovely it was to be man, to be flesh, to be living and yet to have at the edge of my life the stirrings in everything of the infinite, not merely at the edge but in the center too, in the dreams I had, in my hand, in my face, in my family; in the Church.



What sorts of signs did I see when I was a boy that pointed out the Lord to me? I saw awful, conventional Catholicism but, alas, I did not recognize it as awful or conventional. I was surrounded by too much beauty, and my family fascinated me even in the extraordinary limits of their troubled lives.

My parents hated Jews, did not speak of Negroes, and mostly had as friends the stricken *jeunesse dorée* of the twenties. Priests were other-than-I, they were not my pals, nor my parents' familiars, though Father Shea did come on Saturday afternoons to have Scotch and soda with Father. I remember them in the living room before the fire, Shea in his collar, Father in riding clothes. I never for a minute thought that the priest was any less a priest because he talked about horses, and never believed for a moment that his magical, holy mask was lifted when he came into my house. No one ever bothered to explain anything at all to me, from the way the Church worked, to sex. On Sunday we went to Mass *en tribe*, sitting all together, with Mother protesting all the while we proceeded down the aisle to a pew in the dead center of the church. But Sunday Mass was often a rout, for Father liked to get up early in the morning (cook slept late Sunday mornings) to make breakfast, a malevolent affair of pork chops, omelets, German fried potatoes, toast and cheese. I hated to eat because I could not receive the Eucharist if I did. We came near to blows about that. Father raged. I trembled, but I mocked him too and refused to eat, and when I went to Communion I knew he looked through me, ferreting out the disorderly wanderer he saw too early to please me.

I knew that we were Roman Catholic, and that the churches in Southport we passed on the way to swim or Sunday lunches at my cousins in Darien were not "our church," and that the people who went there were "not our people." I knew that whatever it was that we all called Roman Catholic was a rather special thing and that those not in it were not quite as special as we were. I have not yet found any reason to think that such a sense of being apart from people was a bad lesson to learn. (It is not unpleasant to be a snob.) It was bad, of course, to think that if one were not a Catholic one was damned, and that was taught us too. But I do not think I ever believed that, though when I was living in Vermont a summer after I had graduated from college, a convert friend of my family's dragged me for a month into the most vicious of right-wing Catholic thought; I spent that month hating Jews, Margaret Sanger, all Protestants, and Paul Blanshard. I never really hated at all. It was a fever. I remember one night I listened to a recording of Margaret Sanger urging ladies in Detroit or some such place to limit the size of their families by using "birth control." My friend said: "Listen, Ned, doesn't she sound like the devil when she laughs." She laughed, and for a minute I thought that she did sound devilish, for such was the way that sex was taught us that the mention of birth control brought on a rash of moral horror whether or not we knew, as I did not know then, what birth control was about.

What trouble the Church started in me had to do with the sensuous world I inhabited, the world of the Incarnation, the world that Christ Jesus did come into, suffer through, die for, and redeem. The Church never really believed that the world was quite as good as it was; it had never quite gotten used to the sheer corporality of it. It distrusted it too, even if I knew the Lord saw it good enough to save from the devil. I fell like a brick to the wiles of the world. I simply wanted to devour it and let it devour me. When the body came into contact with the world, the Church hesitated, drew back, reneged on the promise of the Lord to make it new again, and turned its eyes from the Gospel to save the Gospels from the world. It never worked, and the near-schism the Church suffers from now is partly the bad harvest of years spent by her denying the body. For me Margaret Sanger was the voice of the body heard (even from that recording) talking about things I did not understand and was told by the Church I ought not try to understand.

My parents left God pretty much up to me. As I stumbled through my childhood, my family was silent about the divine, but when I turned six they did send me off to St. Thomas Convent in Fairfield on Saturday mornings to prepare me for my First Communion.



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Sister Mary Joseph, in her black linen down to the floor, her starched-in face, her smell of incredible cleanliness, and her quiet prance, was a creature of dreadful measure for me. I sat in the dark paneled parlor, I on a straight-backed chair facing Sister in her straight-backed chair, the daylight cut out of the room by heavy red velvet curtains and dense Irish lace. A portrait of the Mother Foundress hung on the wall like the picture of a corpse. Saints on linen "doilies," vases of flowers, absolute silence—I never heard a door open or a nun, but for Sister Joseph, talk—but for a honk of a horn from a passing car on the Post Road beyond. In that room I learned about the Lord from a thin, gray-covered catechism. In that book there were questions and answers. I learned the answers and spoke them back exactly as they were written. The language in that catechism was bland, serious, absolutely straightforward. The Church was right. Everything else was wrong. I listened, memorized, and believed. Sister never asked me what I thought. She never simplified. She never brought me posters or cards with the Gospels reduced to slogans. She paraphrased but did not interpret. She laid the Church on the line of my six-year-old imagination and there it stayed ready for me to do with it what I willed—reject it, hate it, love it, use it.

"What does it mean, Sister, when you just said my soul is immortal?"

"I mean," she answered, "that your soul will not die or ever go away from God even when you die or are naughty."

"If it doesn't go away, why doesn't it? What is my soul like? What does it look like?"

I remember now so clearly that as we spoke so of the soul I heard another horn honk outside the window and I went to part the curtains, thinking it was Father come to fetch me. It was instead the first car in a wedding procession turning into the church drive, and as I parted the curtains the bride stepped out. Sister was at my shoulder. A breeze caught the bride's veil and it floated up behind, filling the morning light.

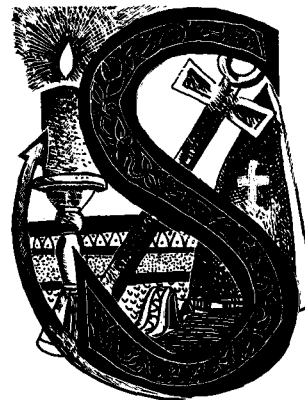
"There, Ned, that looks like your soul, pure, white, and free, and good."

I went home that morning with the idea in my head that my soul floated through me like that veil, some insubstantial thing, flitting about in my veins, in my bones, through my hair, holding me up like a fence, as the world moved beyond me. It became from then my constant visitor, like a cricket I once discovered in a room I had in the country, hidden in the boards or in some crack in the window, invisible but loud, and clearly a sign of life and the world. I wonder how a modern teacher of religion would answer my question were I to ask it today. I think she would go to a slide projector perhaps and flash something on the wall, or dig into a penny dreadful book on catechetics

and come up with some perfectly awful metaphor dredged up from the convent of liberated nuns deep into the mysteries of Jung. I do know that whatever she answered would be either the most acutely reactionary pre-Christian piety or the most modish "relevancy."

I touched there in the St. Thomas Convent parlor the fringe of the divine, the Lord, the weight of God, the universe. I had no intermediary then as I learned about the Church, but the world and the Church. I stood in my childhood overwhelmed, with my soul shuttling through me like a lost dandelion seed, as I collected baseball cards in packs of bubble gum, put flowers around a statue of St. Teresa on my bureau and watched Father mount Leigh-ho, his brown mare, some kin of Man-o-War, and go with his pals to search out a be-deviled rabbit in the hills.

I thought of soul as something other than me. It rode on the peak of my childhood like the sapphire and diamond half-moon on the peak of Grandmother de Bouthillier's mourning veil: the shifting beacon in calamity, the sign of the sacred world and the holiness of life, a darting sprite bearing messages to me of creation the way farmers say bees bear messages of this world to the Lord. Contemporary philosophy and theology do not speak of the soul without a blush. I do not think that I would be a poet now had I been taught of God by liberated theologians and nuns who plunder the Lord and the world of mystery straight off. Glory, transcendence, the unapproachable, the unspeakable were all names I called however deeply in my soul, that fragile guest within me that was the herald of divinity.



omewhere along the way those days I knew that Christ, that stupendous presence that everyone had spoken to me about but never named, was a person. His name, His place in the world came through into my spirit like a clown on a trapeze, from beyond me, yet somehow He was always within, a guest,

yet utterly alien. When I made my First Communion I dreamed of Him the night before as someone in a wild meadow surrounded by all the wild beasts in the world's jungles. When the priest lifted up the host at the consecration I felt a terrible sense of the mystery and stupendous "trick" of the Mass. (I dared not look up at the host for fear I would see Jesus there.) Nowadays I fear such

thoughts would be judged unhealthy and merely pious ditherings of an aslant psyche.

My teachers in the parochial school my parents sent me to when I entered first grade were a languid bunch of good nuns and gentle ladies who believed in the Church in all its teachings (the good teachings, the inaccurate teachings, the stupid teachings were all the same to them: they were from the Church and therefore right) and in everyone who served it. I came to class each morning and knelt down on my chair and prayed. I faced the back wall and looked straight into the closed door of a closet where the sisters told us that even within *its* darkness, had we ever thought of running there to sin, God would find us out and punish us. Sister sat down at her desk and "taught." Across her blotter lay the "ruler," never used to measure anything but brought down with vicious rage across our hands if we "transgressed." We always "transgressed." One never knew exactly what one did when that thin piece of wood with the metal strip across the top came down across one's hands or arm, but it did not matter; nuns and priests were judges, and we never bothered to complain, since what they did they did through that odd and often quite marvelously imaginative, stern, and winsomely powerful channel of the "Church."

I think my love of the Church perhaps began then in those days when the Church in her monolithic, unliberated, shivering *figura* could still announce the mystery of creation and not fall victim to the marketplace. I remember, for instance, how I discovered death.

One morning in early spring I came to school and found that an old nun had died over the weekend. We were told that the day would be one of mourning for her and at ten o'clock we would go to pray for her soul in the convent chapel where her body was. None of us had ever seen a dead body and we knew of death only through the whispers of our parents and nurses when an ancient aunt or family friend died. At ten we lined up in twos, boys first, girls behind, and walked down the stony drive to the convent and stood outside the front door till we were bidden in. We walked through the kitchen, through the dining room, and up into the chapel. And there she lay. (I let out a terrible sneeze, for the odor of the nun's starched linen and black cotton affected me like pepper.) We marched around the coffin, first the boys, then the girls. Sister lay "exposed" in a coffin raised up in the middle of the room. She seemed to shine with a gray light and lay so fiercely still that I thought she was held down by iron clamps. One by one, as we got closer to her body, our blood froze a little. We did not know what to do. No one told us. Death was upon us and we had to be there since Sister's soul was not "in" her anymore (her "dandelion seed" had es-

caped) and we had to pray for it. A smell like talcum powder and violets lay in the air and grew to the power of a drum over her body. I held my breath as long as I could, half opened my eyes, peeked, and scurried by looking for some light to come in from behind the blacked-out windows where blood-red curtains had been drawn tight across. Her yellow face, her pursed lips, her glasses and closed eyes beyond them kicked at my heart like a horse I saw once kick a dog behind it in the mouth.

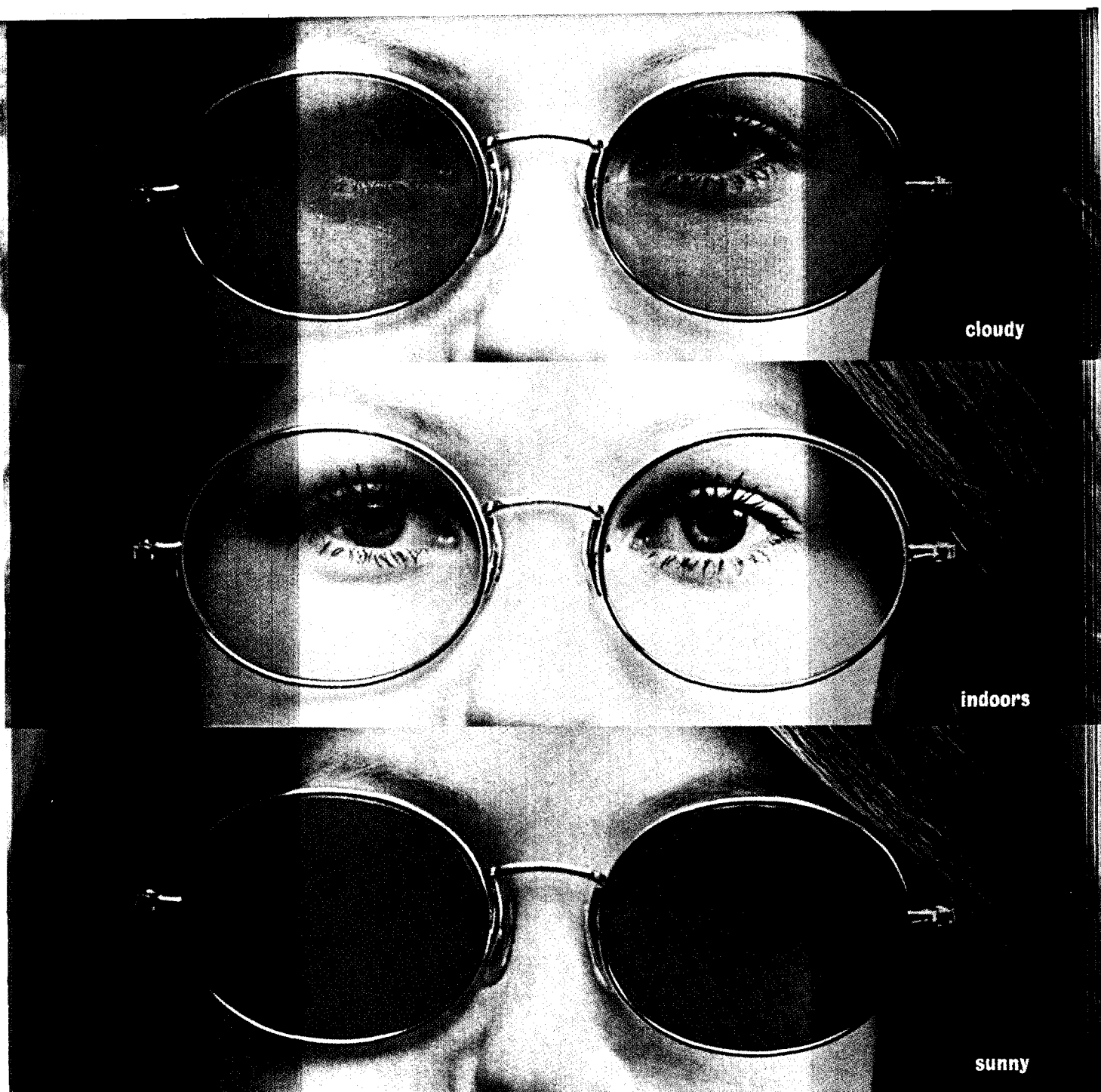
No convivial modern wake, that one. It was death in all its brimming silence. That morning seemed to drag on forever. We recited the rosary, but all the time we stood there at the end of the chapel, the dead nun's body seemed to swell and move up into the air and cast a livid shadow on the ceiling.

But as quickly, we rushed into preparations for a May procession. Those processions are mocked now, but I am happy I knew about them before everything in the liturgy had to undergo a bout with "relevancy." The statue of the Virgin, high up on her pedestal surrounded by flowers of all kinds, was greeted by a long line of children wending their way through the church, led by the prettiest girl in the class with a crown of apple blossoms carried on a satin cushion. For me, the ritual, the organ music, the hymns, and the Virgin were not merely holy things, but more than that they were messages of the most delicate and delicious kind, telling me of ceremony, of the intense center of the universe where myth dwelt along with the Church.



children learn of God from certain visitations of the infinite that crack down in their world like whips of light. I learned of Him through the nuns and through my wild family, who surrounded me with the splendid variety of feelings that only families with slightly mad notions in the blood can bear to

their children. I had an aunt whose mother was enormously rich who came to visit us on Sundays for lunch during the year. She came once on a Sunday when I was sick abed with measles. I lay in my dark room staring at the ceiling when the door opened and she walked in, the only light the flickers of light coming in from the hall striking her body as it moved toward me. She bent over to kiss me and I saw falling from her head an avalanche of peacock and ostrich feathers, for she was



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famous in our family for her wild hats and jewels, and that day she had on a fantasia that sent horror and delight through my eight-year-old body. I thought I had seen God and that He had come to fetch me to heaven. I screamed and pulled the covers over my head. Later I wrote a poem about it.

The Aunt

When children are very young
aunts can be quite anyone
who is old and unremarkable.
This aunt was archetypically correct,
doubting children and their dogs,
aching when it rained, praying for accord
between the sexes and the late arrival.
Content with nothing if it were right. . . .

When I was young I thought of God
as color and found that it was hard
to banish him to blue or white,
the colors I knew from watching.

Once when I was ill and wrapped in bed,
at five o'clock my Aunt stood at my head
and swished me with her crinkled hand.
And, as she bent to kiss me, I saw descending

an assault of color, moving in the air,
a troop of peacocks' tails, a flair
of spectrum wrenched from light.
Astounded with this sudden firework

I carefully constructed God again,
his temper and his mind, his ken,
his fatal hand, and discovered
my Aunt had carried on her head

My God without a single angel
to help her with the load.

When will
The Aunt reveal again the answer and
the question: quem colorem habet sapientia.

I was graced with a family who for all their raw agony never could stop the world from blessing me. I think of what a gift it was to see life in such complexity and such style; what a gift it was to know that the Lord and the Church were mysteries that were part of the world of my childhood as well as utterly transcendent powers that at once judged me and loved me. Christ, the Church, the world, love, sexuality, poetry were being revealed to me, formally, sternly even, perhaps, for the liberated man of this day, even a little tyrannically. Still, in the 1930s, everything was settled: no one divorced, grandparents took offense at everything, priests, nuns, popes, cardinals, bishops, and theologians never lifted for an instant their holy veils to stretch out into the world to touch the common occasion of God's will. My family and the Church told me that if I did what I ought, and what I ought to do was clearly laid out for me, I'd be fine and that everything would be fine. I thought a good deal about sin, good manners, my ancestry,

flowers, sailboats, horseback riding, liquor and drunkenness, sex and my own body, and discovered that all was not fine at all, and that what everyone was telling me was largely rot.

Heaven especially came out rather badly. It seemed to me that it was an endless veranda where good men (the men the church "approved" of) spent eternity sitting on rocking chairs and talking to God about God knows what. The "disapproved" (almost everyone I knew then and would know later) were in hell. Certainly no one I knew would ever get to heaven if he kept up the pace I watched so curiously and with such joy. I was a sensualist, a hedonist, a true believer in the glory of the moment, and if Christ was at the center of everything, as I knew he was, he must be there as more than a scolding judge. I think I feared at one time that he might be a little like Grandmother O'Gorman when she washed my mouth out with soap and water with such brute gusto.

But luckily I was lazy, and thoughts crept into my spirit slowly, and by the time they got there the world in its glory, my family in its rioting balancing act between happiness and desperation, and the Church in her hints of the Incarnation and glory kept me a very happy boy. And how lucky I was, too, to have grown up in a Church that did not think it a mark of the wise man to open up every Pandora's box and poke about with the devil as if he were an alderman caught with his hand in the till. There were demons enough within me and my family to make the powers of darkness familiar.



was devoured till I was twenty by a cannibal stammer. The older I grew the hungrier it grew. In school I sat in my assigned place in class waiting for Sister to call on me to recite as a man might wait the fall of a handkerchief in front of a firing squad. I prayed that the bell for the end of class

would ring and bring that inexorable progress of Sister down the aisle to an end. It never did.

"Ned, who made the world?"

"Ggggod mmmmmade the wworldd."

"Why did God make you?"

"God made me to llove and sssserve him innn thththis wwworld and ttto bbbee hahahappy wwwith him fforever innn ttthe nnext."

The Church's and my family's ugliest manner in those days was their cold-blooded, almost cruel

fury with human weakness. I remember when Father Paul Amy, my Jesuit cousin, came to visit us and cracked his head on a beam as I led him up into the attic to look at my trains. He was nearly seven feet tall and I was so used then to my family's rages at the slightest breach of manners that I thought he'd bring hellfire down on me and spent the night praying that the Lord would give me time to repent. Stammering, lying, tardiness, inattention at prayers, mild cursing, bad manners (I was forbidden by my father to whistle and by my grandmothers to point at anything; they told me to be a gentleman and I grew to think it meant to sneer at anyone who was not in my family), forgotten prayers were all "sins," and God looked upon me most often as a sinner, since according to my family and the nuns I seldom did anything that was not at least a "little sin."

I am glad, though, that I learned of life from my awry family and from a Church on the brink of Vatican Two. Nothing then was dull. Now, in this new Church, everything becomes, very quickly, very dull. There are no processions, no incense, no sin, no candles, no vestments, no long, drawn-out liturgies where one was forced to think, whether one liked it or not, about the divine. Everything

now is short, clean, brightly modern, and for all the "relevance," morbidly uninteresting.

When I was a boy I envied the gardener who tended our flowers and lawns, for I thought he, of all men, must have been the happiest, being as he was so close to the land and the weather in all its changes. I learned forever then that prayer was adoration of life in all its changes: the discovery of dreams, sexual anguish, the expectation of death, guilt, their somber drummings and masks, the curiosity of my family and its lusty basking in the heats of my will. One day when I could not bear any longer the family in its present unruly masquerade, I walked into the woods behind our house and banged into the bark of a tree the crucifix of my rosary, to build there a sacred place I could go to when my house and my boyhood could not let me be at peace. I think of the Church, my family, and me in the bark of the world, growing with it, disappearing now and then into it, living with it, dying with it, resurrecting with it in the riddle of my life. I write of the Church from the place it has taken in me, as judge, as the beginning of my poems, as the form of my dreams, and the splendid, four-dimensional bulk of my salvation. □

PROPHET

In the fifteenth year of the emperor Tiberius
 He hunted hives of wild bees
 Breaking open the hollows of wood or bone
 Seizing the sweet marrow. Quicker than grasshoppers
 He crunched wing and belly.
 His face gnarled under the sun.
 At night he crawled under
 A goatskin. The air was thin out there
 The stars big as melons.
 The brook for water or washing in
 Or to cleanse an occasional stranger of his wickedness.
 His hair matted. His dry beard
 Bristled away from his jaw.
 Ravens flew by sometimes. Small groups of men
 He shouted to, came, bringing others.
 Clearly the world couldn't go on like this.

by Ann Stanford

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Caprice Sport Sedan in front of the San Francisco Opera House.

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“GRAND WHAT?”

And other great works of earth art

by Will Stanton

Perhaps you'd be interested in a hole in the desert in the shape of a pyramid upside down.

I entered the lobby of the Quality Courts Motel in Moonglow, Arizona, and found Mrs. Elsie Birdcraft waiting for me. A stout, graying, no-nonsense sort of woman, she was an art critic from San Francisco and ours was an artistic mission. We were off to see the latest work of earth artist Max Jelke, who had been much in the news lately. My own interest in earth art went back to the early sixties, when Big Jim Raha had constructed his controversial *Poignancy*, an 800-foot heart made of wrecked cars. It seemed to me that any movement that could deny all the canons of art in so massive and random a way must have a message for all of us.

I invited Mrs. Birdcraft to have luncheon with me, but she was eager to get started and said we could pick up something on the way. She proved to be a very fast and careless driver and from her thick spectacles and constant squint it was apparent that her eyesight was no more than adequate. As she drove, she told me something about Jelke's latest. It is called *The Square Root of Minus One* and is a hole in the desert in the shape of a pyramid upside down. Looking at it in another way, it is an inverted pyramid of air, thought to be the only one of its kind.

Opinions on earth art are greatly divided, even among the artists themselves. Spectators want to know what is artistic about a hole in the ground or a half-mile square of rock. The artists shrug and rev up their bulldozers. They seem to thrive on hostility. The reviews of Gump Dortweiler's 110-

foot-high twin mounds of earth entitled *48 double E* labeled it pretentious, expensive, meaningless, and ugly. Asked for his reaction, Dortweiler thought for a moment. "Well," he said, "I would say they hit it on the head."

The air conditioner of the rented car wasn't working, so we had to drive with the windows down and, since the roads were largely unimproved, we were soon covered with a fine layer of dust. We were to meet Max Jelke at a place called the Great Western Café, but the proprietress said she hadn't seen him in several days. She did give us a note he had left which was entirely illegible. Mrs. Birdcraft was of the opinion that it was written in some foreign language.

The woman took back the note. "You *are* the people about the bottling machines, aren't you?" she asked.

Mrs. Birdcraft said no we weren't but it was all right because she thought she knew the way anyhow. We went back and got in the car and drove off.

Although we tend to think of earth art as something modern, its roots are deep in American history. The originator, or one of them, was Mustang Bill Fraley of San Antonio, Texas. In the 1880s he got together a herd of some five hundred cows, wrapped their feet in rags soaked in indigo, and drove them to Abilene.

Of course, the Blue Trail no longer exists, but we do have a number of watercolors of it painted by a schoolteacher named Hannah L. Beers. It is an ironic sidelight of earth art that the only mementos of its historic beginning are representational paintings, which all true earth artists despise.

After more than an hour of very rough driving, the road we were following came to an end at an abandoned mine. Mrs. Birdcraft said it was apparent that the directions she had been given were

wrong. She said not to worry because she thought she knew where she could get the right ones. I was beginning to feel light-headed from the heat and from missing lunch. Also I had gotten a nasty cut on my hand from pulling the rear fender away from the tire after Mrs. Birdcraft had backed into a post while turning around.

At the Last Chance Gas Station, an elderly man said he knew the place we were looking for and he was going right by it. We hurried to purchase some peanut butter crackers and cream soda—all they had in the way of refreshments—and set out. We followed the old fellow's truck along a narrow trail in a cloud of dust for some twelve miles. I remarked jokingly that if we could only make a movie of the dust cloud, that itself might qualify as an earth work. Mrs. Birdcraft said it had been done.

Because of their nature, many earth works are available to viewers by photograph only. Terry Ramoulian, for example, has given a new dimension to the traditional art of wood-burning. Instead of using a hot needle to burn a small piece of board, Ramoulian uses a flame thrower and burns forests, later taking aerial photographs. His particular art is naturally susceptible to the vagaries of weather, the two worst enemies being clouds and rain, which can interfere with photography or even wipe out a whole fire. However, he accepts these hazards with equanimity. As he says, "You win a few, you lose a few."

Other artists, such as K. K. Brancher, hold that their works must be viewed as they are and bitterly resent having them "stolen" by photographers. Brancher's most recent work is a tunnel that runs through a granite hillside in Vermont. "Let's see some bastard try to photograph that," he is said to have remarked. The tunnel, which he calls *Alimentary School*, is eight feet in diameter and loops and turns for 1003 feet before emerging farther up the hillside. "I was going to make it an even thousand," he said smiling, "and then I decided to add 3 percent tax." It was pointed out that 3 percent of 1000 was 30 and not 3. "Well," Brancher said, "the hell with it."

The man in the truck finally stopped and led us several hundred yards from the road and pointed out a perfectly ordinary canyon. Mrs. Birdcraft asked him why in the world he had taken us all that distance for nothing. "We told you we were looking for a hole in the ground shaped like a pyramid."

He said this one was shaped more like a pyramid than any other he knew about. "A pyramid is shaped mostly like this, isn't it?" and he traced a shape in the air much like a loaf of bread.

Mrs. Birdcraft said no, a pyramid wasn't shaped like that at all. He said, well, he didn't know. We

thanked him and headed back. Mrs. Birdcraft said that the only thing to do was to phone her office in San Francisco and get the exact directions. She turned the steering wheel sharply to avoid a jack-rabbit and hit a small boulder, blowing out the right front tire. The spare was only half inflated but it was all we had. While I was changing tires, Mrs. Birdcraft opened the peanut butter crackers, which were nothing but crumbs. We couldn't find anything to open the bottles with.

When I was interviewing K. K. Brancher in his studio, I met his friend Bobby Lee Taliaferro who is the undisputed king of earth-work graffiti. His most famous is near Provo, Utah, where he used dynamite to blast the letters of a single word on the face of a cliff. It can be seen for over forty miles and would have been without question the largest four-letter word in the world, except that Bobby Lee misspelled it, making it a five-letter word.

"I always thought there was an *E* onto it," he explained.

He hasn't been working lately—he feels dynamite isn't adequate for his purposes and is hopeful of obtaining nuclear blasting power. "They talk about progress," he said, "but they make us use the same stuff as the old-time Greeks."

Someone suggested that the ancient Greeks did not, in fact, have dynamite.

"Yeah, they did," he said. "They used it for the Acropolis and like that."

He says Japan has offered him all the nuclear explosives he wants; it's only a question of raising the funds. A museum in Moscow, he says, has shown considerable interest.

The Last Chance Gas Station didn't have a phone but the proprietor directed us to a grocery about six miles down the road. The grocery did have a phone, but the grocer refused to let Mrs. Birdcraft call San Francisco even collect. He was afraid he would be charged for it. I told the man thanks anyway. "Better do something about that tire," he said. "Looks like she's going flat on you." I said I knew. We decided to try to find a store or motel with a pay phone.

After we had driven a few miles, Mrs. Birdcraft said we should have filled the tire while we were at the gas station.

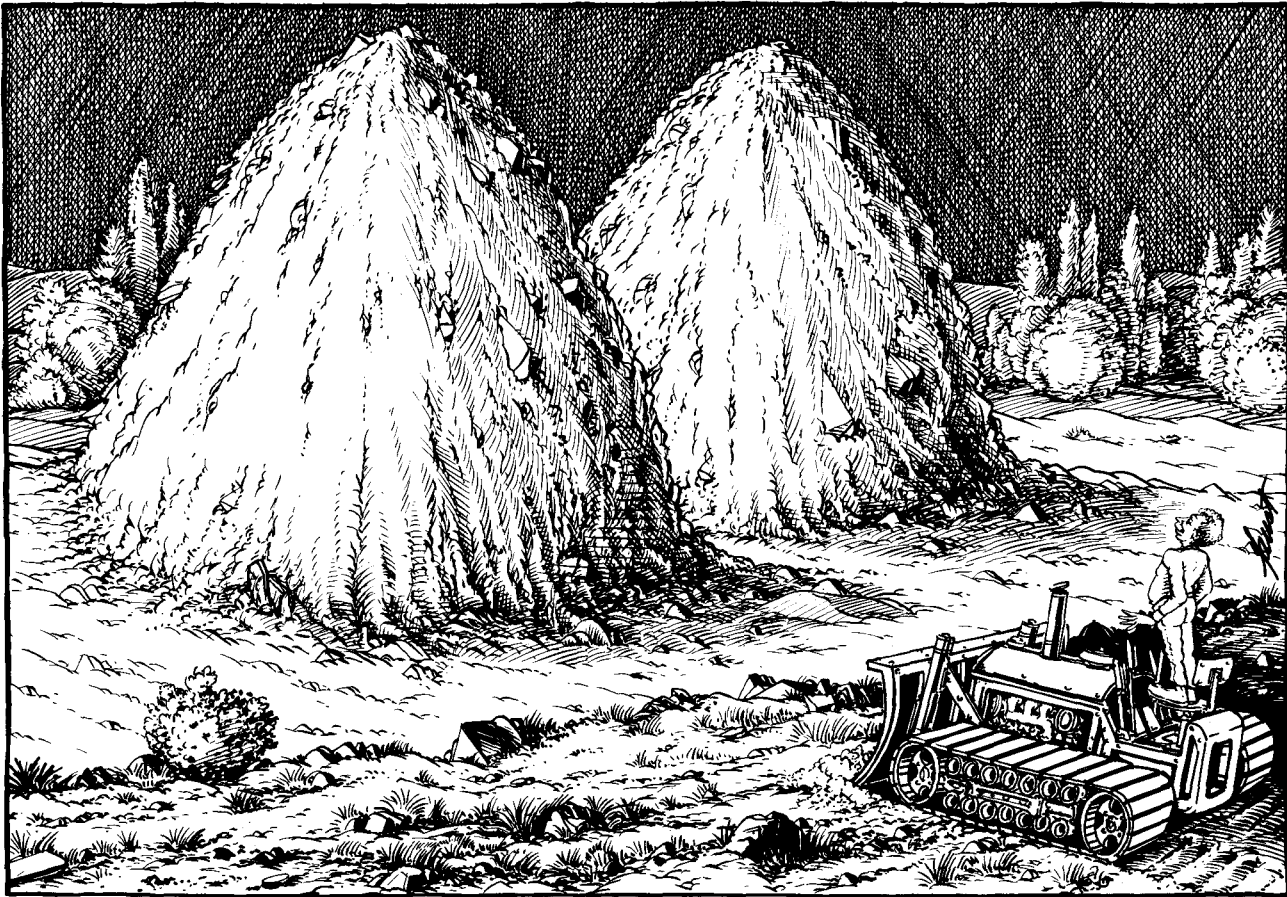
"Yes," I said, "and we should have bought some food while we were at the grocery store."

"You can't think of everything," Mrs. Birdcraft said.

We finally found a motel with a pay phone and she made her call. "I was right all along," she said, "the place is no more than a mile from here." But when we talked to the manager, he had never heard of it. Nobody had ever heard of it. "I can't understand it," she said, "it was in all the papers—New York—San Francisco . . ."

The manager said, "I tell you where to go—this

Will Stanton is the author of a novel, *The Golden Evenings of Summer*.



fellow will know about it if anybody does,” and he gave us a complicated set of instructions and we set out once more.

When I talked with Bobby Lee, he had referred to Anson Block as one who had most successfully wedded the traditional with the modern. His pictures are as true to life as those of Rembrandt, except that for a canvas he uses a 640-acre field in Kansas. From a paper sketch, the outline is staked out on the field, he then goes over it with a twenty-blade plow, and later plants it with some gaily colored flowers. One of his best known, planted in poppies, is called *Reclining Red Nudes in Wheat Field*. I have never seen it myself, although it is on the airline route from New York to Los Angeles. Both times I flew over it there was a complete cloud cover. The pilot circled hopefully for over half an hour each time, but to no avail.

Certainly the most grandiose earth work ever contemplated was the one designed by Fred E. Natwick entitled *Grand What?* It called for the complete filling in of the Grand Canyon. Natwick received a government grant for a preliminary survey and the Army Engineers promised complete cooperation. His plans were well under way when someone observed that the best way to obtain the necessary fill would be to dig an identical canyon alongside it. Earth artists everywhere hailed it as the purest example of art for art's sake ever conceived. Unfortunately, this

drew the attention of the conservationists and other reactionary groups, an uproar was raised, and the project shelved.

Natwick was understandably bitter over the outcome. “It’s the do-gooders and bleeding hearts,” he said. “They’ve always been against the artist. Why can’t they stick to the ghettos and leave the wilderness to us?”

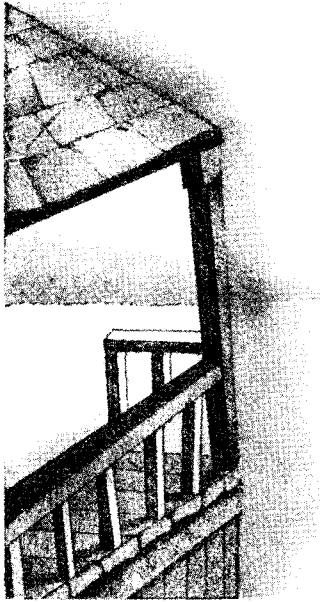
At least the plans and sketches were saved. Those who wish can go to the National Archives and see what might have been.

As we drove along, following the man’s directions, I asked Mrs. Birdcraft if the road didn’t look familiar.

“All roads look familiar in Arizona,” she said. As it turned out, this one *was* familiar because the place it led us to was the Last Chance Gas Station. It was almost dark, so we headed back home.

As we passed the grocery I recalled that we still hadn’t put any air in the tire. A bee was buzzing around Mrs. Birdcraft’s head. She swatted at it with a rolled-up newspaper, knocking her eyeglasses through the car window and breaking one of the lenses. She said she didn’t use that eye much anyway.

We never did find *The Square Root of Minus One*. Like its namesake, it isn’t something you can put your finger on easily, but we know it’s there. Somewhere. And, in the final analysis, maybe that’s enough. □



A FAMILY AFFAIR

A story by John L'Heureux

In that country there was never a wind. Dust hung in the air, flung by the wheels of jeeps as the soldiers tore down Finial Street to the Blue Spider Café. Cozy Oaks was also located on Finial Street; the men from the farms and from the foundry went there, but the soldiers went to the Blue Spider. In April, with all the windows open, the singing and the short high whoops that meant they were having a good time could be heard far out in the fields and sometimes even beyond, where the lucky soldiers with cars brought the girls who seemed most likely to go all the way.

It had been like this every spring of the past four years, even when the base was new and nobody had yet sorted out how they really felt about the soldiers. Beryl Gerriter gave birth that first spring to her son Jason, her deep moans and howls punctuated with the drunken singing from the Blue Spider. Luke Gerriter waited in the sitting room with his daughter Elissa. They said nothing, though from time to time he would send her to the kitchen to get him another beer.

"Why can't I go in?" she asked him.

"Shut your mouth. You're not old enough."

"Twelve is old enough."

He held his beer can to his mouth for a long slug and then he looked at her. Nothing. A face like an axe, everything pulled out to a point, with her mouth pinched already like Beryl's, a worried face. And skinny. How in hell would he ever marry her off?

"Twelve isn't old enough for much," he said.

She knew his voice when he spoke like that, she

was afraid of it, she didn't know why. She leaned over Pal and hugged him, rubbing the fur along his back.

"We should get rid of that mutt. It stinks. That's what the hell's the matter around here. That mutt. One of these days I'm going to take him out and shoot him." Luke slammed his beer can to the floor in fury. "If she don't hurry up in there! Hurry up, you!" he shouted at the bedroom door.

The bedroom door opened and Dr. Pharon stuck his head out. "We've got problems," he said, "serious ones. It's gonna be a while and I can't promise anything. But I suggest, if you got a brain left in that addled head of yours, that you stop drinking and start praying." And he closed the door.

"I'll be at the Oaks," Luke said to his daughter. "You can come and get me when the mule is born."

Elissa nodded, her eyes glazed with fear, and she hugged Pal again. "It's going to be all right, Pal," she said, rocking back and forth, the dog's muzzle in her lap. "Everything's going to be all right. Everything."

She was awakened later by Dr. Pharon, who told her to go find her father; he had something important to tell him.

Outside she paused for a minute to think what she was doing. The sun had gone down and in the still air she could taste the dust. She crossed the lawn to the evergreen tree and held a spiky branch to her face, breathing its sharp smell of oil and gum, a bitter smell, but it was special to her.

Pal whimpered at her feet.

"It's all right," she said, and ran down the dirt road to where it met Finial Street. A small stone caught in the sole of her sneaker and she stooped under the streetlight to poke it out. It had wedged between the rubber sole and the canvas lining and the more she pried at the hole the deeper she pushed the stone.

A jeep roared by, then screeched to a halt and backed up, crookedly, weaving from side to side.

"Hi there, sweetheart."

"She's too young, Ron."

"They're never too young."

Elissa stared at them, not frightened. They were soldiers from the base. Nobody minded the soldiers. The men had jobs now that the soldiers had come. Even her father had a job.

"What do you say, sweetheart? You want a ride?"

He was blond, with a wide, funny smile. He was the most beautiful man she had ever seen.

"I've got to go to the Oaks to get my father."

"Well, you jump right in here between me and my friend and we'll take you straight to the Oaks." He leaped out and held the low door open. She hesitated.

"Come on. You'll be all right."

"For Christ sake, Ron," the driver said.

"What about my dog?"

"Bring your dog too. Come on."

She climbed into the jeep and held out her arms for Pal, who wriggled from the soldier's hands into her lap. Ron climbed in beside her, slamming the small door. "And away we go," he shouted as the jeep took off. His arm, thrown over the seat at her back, drifted gradually to her shoulder. She could feel his hand lightly touching her bare arm.

"What's your name, sweetheart?"

"Elissa," she said, throwing her head back to feel the air blowing in her face.

"Elissa. Well, that's some name. I never heard of a name like Elissa. I think I'd call you Cookie, 'cause you're so sweet." He put his hand on her knee and ran it slowly up toward her thigh.

"Ron, if you want to get your ass in jail, you're going in just the right direction," the driver said.

"What's the matter, for Christ sake? I'm only petting the dog." The two men in back laughed. Ron rubbed Pal's ears and his back. "Isn't that right, Cookie? No harm in petting the doggie."

Elissa thought she had never been so happy.

"My mother just had a baby," she said. "I've got to tell my father."

"That right?" Ron said, his hand going back to her thigh. "You gonna have a baby? Hm? Would you like a baby?"

His hand was hot on her thin dress and she could feel sweat break out on her thigh and up higher. She wished he would move his hand there. She wanted him to touch her all over. But most of all she wanted to put her two arms around his neck and lay her head on his chest and just stay like that for a long, long time.

"Cozy Oaks," the driver said, slamming on the brakes.

And then she was out of the jeep and it was roaring off, the men in back laughing and Ron shouting, "See you around, Cookie." She stood for a long while watching the trail of dust the jeep left behind. She could still feel each of his fingers on her thigh and his thumb moving back and forth.

All the way home she repeated their conversation in her mind. I think I'd call you Cookie, 'cause you're so sweet, he had said. And he had asked if she would like a baby. She put her hand on her thigh where he had put his. For once she did not care that her father was stumbling along in the dark, cursing every goddamn stone in his path, the goddamn wife who called him away from his buddies, the goddamn baby that would put them all in the poorhouse. She had not even minded going into Cozy Oaks to get him. She had only half heard the sarcastic comments of the men at the bar, the double-meaning jokes, the laughter. While he bought a round of beer for everyone, she had stood at the screen door looking down toward the Blue Spider, where Ron was probably dancing or drinking with some pretty girl he was calling Cookie because she was so sweet, but it didn't matter. He had been nice, and whether he meant it or not, he had said it.

"You said it's a boy."

"What?" She stopped and tried to wiggle the stone into another part of her shoe.

"The baby. You said it's a boy."

"Yes."

"Did you see it?"

"No. Dr. Pharon said to go right away."

"Then how do you know it's a boy?" His voice was angry.

"I don't know. I just think it is. I don't know."

She put her arm up to ward off the blow, but he had only meant to caress her. They stood looking at one another.

"I thought you were going to hit me."

"I never hit you. You're like your mother, you try to put me in the wrong. You try to make me look bad."

"No. I don't. I . . ." She lowered her eyes.

He put his arm around her shoulder now, stiffly, feeling the small, tense muscles beneath his fingers. They walked this way, father and child in a book of photographs, until they reached the little house where all the lights were on.

Dr. Pharon explained patiently that the child was a mongoloid and would probably not live

long. The mother had required many stitches, she should be in a hospital, but there was no hospital, and he would have to pay Mrs. Botts to stay with her.

Luke Gerriter listened with his head in his hands and, when the doctor left, he saw him to the door. Then he went into the bedroom, where he looked in the crib for a long moment, for the last time. And then he stared at the gray figure in the bed.

"So you had to do this to me, too," he said. "One lay in three years, and you had to produce this. You bitch." He turned at the door to look at her again. "You miserable bitch," he said, and lumbered up the stairs to Elissa's attic room.

Elissa stretched out on the sitting-room couch where she stroked Pal and whispered over and over again, "It's all right; it's going to be all right."

The next morning Luke bought a bed frame that folded in half and a mattress to go with it and he set them up in the tiny bedroom. He said nothing to Beryl—everything between them seemed to have been said already—and she remained with her face turned resolutely to the wall. She had not asked to see the baby.

Almost at once they had settled into a regular routine. At three o'clock Elissa returned from school and Mrs. Botts went home. Elissa prepared her father's dinner and then he disappeared until midnight or later, when he came stumbling home from the Oaks. Meanwhile Elissa sat with her mother, saying nothing. No one in the house said anything.

Elissa had instructions from Mrs. Botts about caring for the baby and she went about the work methodically, automatically; it was the way she made dinner, the way she did schoolwork; it was as if there were some more important part of her that simply stepped out and walked away, leaving the methodical, automatic Elissa behind to do the work.

School was the worst part of the day. The others teased her about her idiot brother and once one of the teachers had called her aside in the school yard and asked about her mother and her father and finally about her brother. She wanted to know if he had a big head and if his eyes were pink; she asked her to describe him. Elissa said she didn't know how and tried to pull away, but the teacher had hold of her arm.

"You tell me, you hear. I've got to know these things. I'm only doing my duty." She tightened her grasp on the girl's arm.

Elissa tried to run, but could not get away. And then something inside her took over and it was as if she were talking with her father when he was drunk and impossible. She said in her dreamy way, "He's just a baby, just a little ordinary baby.

His eyes are blue, a pretty light blue they are, and his head is only as big as a baby's head. He cries when he's hungry and then my mother feeds him, but most of the time he just laughs and plays with his toys and sleeps. Just like any baby."

"Are you telling me the truth?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"That isn't what everybody says. What do you say to that?"

"Maybe they haven't seen him," Elissa said. "He's a real nice baby."

More and more she found herself alone; she played with the dog and sat with the baby in her mother's room, waiting.

Luke had to be very drunk before he could get courage to come back to that small bedroom smelling of sour sheets and milk and lie there knowing Beryl was not asleep and that thing lay in the darkness.

He thought sometimes he would get up and place a pillow over the baby's face and put it out of its misery. He thought of shooting it. Some nights as he turned off Finial Street into the dirt road that led to his house, he saw himself approach the door and walk through the house and down the cellar stairs and get a gun—the small pistol maybe, with its shiny blue barrel, or one of the rifles—and go back up the stairs, through the sitting room and into the bedroom, and there . . . He could not imagine the rest in detail, but there was one small shot into the crib and then a scream from Beryl, followed by two shots and then a silence. He held the gun at his own head. On those dark nights staggering home from Finial Street, he would weep at how rotten life was. He would go home and fall into bed, and it did not matter anymore that Beryl was lying there awake, staring straight ahead.

After the first day Mrs. Botts gave up trying to talk to Beryl, but she could never be sure whether she was asleep or awake. Sometimes it was as if she were staring even when her eyes were shut. She'd be plumb glad, she told herself, when this whole thing was over.

Only Elissa was indifferent to Beryl's silent stare. Often, coming home from school, she would stand at the bedroom door and look at her mother, thinking, she'll never come back, she's gotten away to some place where there are trees and air and no more shouting and she'll never come back. She envied her.

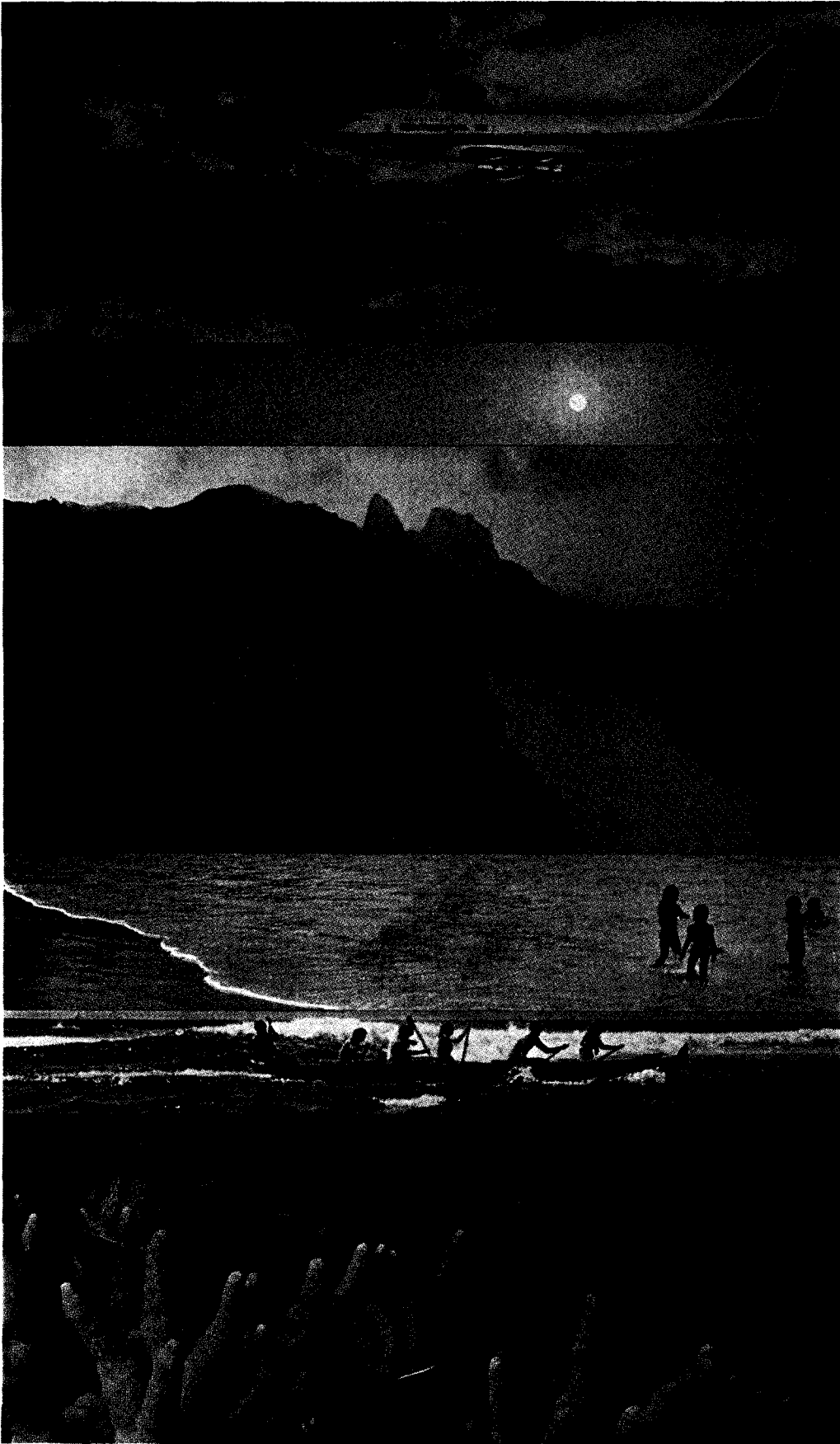
And Beryl lay there, with her gray face on the pillow, staring. It was almost a month before she asked to see the baby. There had been no warning, no signs of a return to life; suddenly one afternoon she simply turned in the bed, lifted herself on one elbow, and spoke to Mrs. Botts. Her voice was clear and strong.

"Let me see it," she said.

Mrs. Botts looked up from her knitting. "How's that?"

"Let me see it. The baby."

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"Well, now, Berla. Are you real sure you want to do that? Might be as how well enough should be let alone till you're feeling better."

"I'm real sure."

Mrs. Botts picked up the baby and laid him in the bed next to Beryl, who twisted beneath the sheet so that she could get a better look at him. She took a long, deep breath and her chest heaved twice as if she were going to sob. And then she whispered "No," a long breathy sound that turned into a deep moan. She forced herself into a sitting position, picked up the baby, and crushed it to her breast, swaying her body from side to side as she clutched the white unresisting thing.

Mrs. Botts stroked Beryl's hair and said over and over, "That's all right, Berla, you go ahead and cry. That's all right, Berla," and she went on stroking, waiting for the release of tears. But the tears did not come.

After a long while she said, "Look at it. Just look at it."

The baby had smooth, almost puffy skin, moist in the airless room. His ears were small and round and his nose only a blob of flesh, not like a nose at all. His lips were thick, the color of raw meat. Beryl bent closer and looked at his tongue. It had two deep grooves and protruded from his tiny mouth. But it was his head that astonished her most. It was small and hard and completely round. She had expected a monstrosity, an enormous watermelon head. Looking at him at first, she had been relieved, she had almost begun to hope. And then she recalled the doctor's warning. "He's a mongoloid, he will never be normal, he will probably not live very many years," and she saw the huge lips and the tiny slits for eyes. With her

thumb she gently pushed up one eyelid. The eye was milky blue and empty.

She had not wanted him, she had not wanted sex in the first place, and now this had happened. She crooked her finger under his tiny palm and looked at his hand. Even his hands were wrong. There was a space between his first finger and the rest. His feet had that same strange cleft, as if they were paws, as if he were Pal.

"Put him back," she said, and then a long while later, "I'm going to call him Jason." Her mouth bent in a thin bitter smile.

She was herself again for a few months and then in the fall she had a hysterectomy and after that she left the baby's care entirely to Elissa. She never wanted to see him again, she said.

Jason died just before his second birthday.

Elissa missed him. He was not a mongoloid to her, some strange monster her father would not look at, or a mockery her mother hated. He was that ordinary little baby she had told her teacher about, a baby who cried when he was hungry, but who most of the time played with his toys and slept. She would have a baby of her own someday, in a place different from this one; and she would be loved someday too.

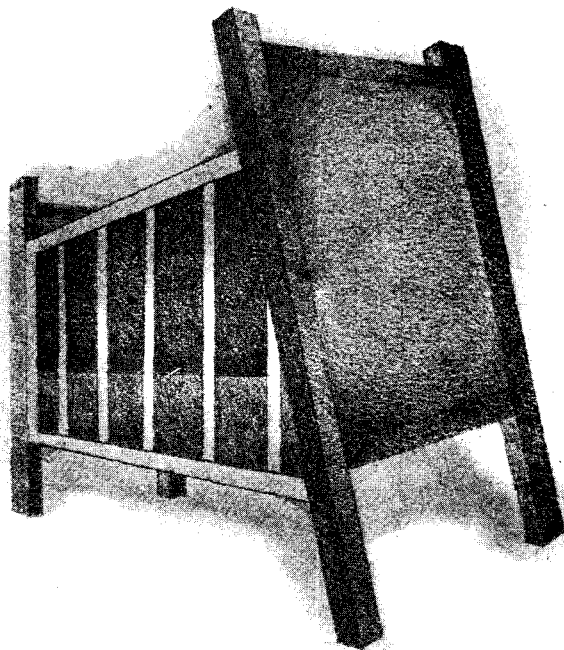
Elissa was fourteen now and plain. Her hair was long and thin, falling straight on either side of her wedge-shaped face. She looked nearsighted, though she was not. The glassy look in her eyes came from daydreaming, her teachers said, but Elissa knew it was something different. She was escaping, she was going away.

Soon after Jason died, she had begun taking Pal for walks each evening. After supper, when her father left for the Oaks and her mother settled into her chair by the radio, Elissa took the dog and walked slowly down the dirt road to Finial Street. She pulled a stick of straw grass from a clump by the road and chewed on it, kicking stones ahead for Pal to chase. She walked slower as she came into sight of Finial Street and under the streetlight she stopped and waited. When she heard one of the jeeps approach, she bent over as if she were taking a stone from her shoe. This was how she had met Ron. There was no saying it couldn't happen again.

And then one night a jeep did stop and come roaring back.

"Hi," a girl said, giggling. She was in the front seat beside a soldier and there were two other soldiers in the back. Her dark red hair tumbled around her shoulders in big curls and her mouth glistened with lipstick. It took Elissa a full minute to recognize her as Florence Kath. Florence was also a freshman at the high school.

"Hi," Elissa said, her eyes darting from face to face. Ron was not there. "Oh, it's you. I didn't recognize you, you're so . . ."



"We're going to the Spider," Florence said. "Want to come?"

"Yeah, why don't you come?" a soldier in back said. "Here, you can sit right between us. We'll take care of you." The other just grinned.

"I'd like to," she said. "I really would, but my dog . . . I've got to get back home." She could not take her eyes off the soldier in front, who had his arm around Florence and was pushing the shoulder of her peasant blouse lower and lower.

"Fresh bastard," Florence said, pleased, and she pushed his hand away. "Come on, Lissa, you'll really love it."

"I can't," she said, "I just can't. My father . . ." She stood there speechless as the jeep took off, scattering dust everywhere.

Elissa and Florence became friends. Each morning during third period they met in the girls' room and smoked a cigarette. And they had lunch together. Though they ate in the cafeteria with everyone else, there were always empty chairs at their table. Florence was cheap, everyone said, Florence did it with the soldiers.

"You ought to come to the Spider, Lissa, it's really terrific. I go only on Saturdays now, but next year I'm gonna go on Fridays and Saturdays too, once I convince my old lady. You ought to come."

"My mother would never let me."

"Well, you ought to come anyway. Last Saturday there was this guy. Oh my God, he was so cute. He bought me a beer by buying it for himself, you know, and letting me drink it. He had real curly hair, black, and we necked like crazy right in the booth. I didn't care. And when he took me home . . ."

"What happened when he took you home? Tell me."

"Nosy bitch, aren't you? I'll tell you on Saturday when we put up our hair."

Every Saturday morning at Elissa's house they put up their hair in huge pink rollers, whispering and giggling at the kitchen sink, splashing water everywhere. Then they sat outside on the back steps letting the sun dry their hair.

Beryl would sometimes lean against the doorframe smoking a cigarette. She had put on weight since her operation and the faded housecoat she invariably wore bulged now with two small rolls around her waist. She kept her hair tied back with a blue and white bandanna.

"Boy-crazy," she would say, and the girls would giggle. "I know," she said, nodding in agreement with herself, "don't think for a minute I don't know."

And sometimes she would study the two girls. Elissa was developing a good bust. Funny about that because she was so skinny, especially in the face. She'd get a man someday all right. Beryl smiled bitterly to herself. Florence was pasty white

with a plump face and a red mouth that was always pouting. She's looking for trouble, Beryl thought, and she'll find it.

"You keep going to that Spider," she would say, "and you'll get what you're looking for."

And once she said, "I remember when I was a kid, about your age, maybe younger, I thought getting married was the best thing that could happen to anybody, just getting away, not having to answer to nobody for nothing. I thought men were . . ." She was looking out over their heads, squinting against the sun, and then suddenly she threw down her cigarette and ground it out. "Men," she said. "They only want one thing." She went inside and slammed the door.

Florence waited a minute until she was sure Beryl was gone and then she said, "Jesus, your mother, is she ever some kind of nut! She's worse than mine. My old lady just keeps nagging and nagging, but at least she's not crazy." She touched the rollers on top of her head gently, protectively. "You know something? I think she's really crazy. I really do."

"It's since the baby died," Elissa said. "And then her operation."

"Maybe it's the change. They get crazy during the change, that's what Tussie told me. Tussie's my aunt and is she ever gorgeous. She's the one that showed me how to put on makeup and everything. She told me all about sex and everything. As if I didn't know already." She shrieked with laughter and Elissa laughed with her.

Florence rummaged through the large embroidered bag she carried everywhere with her. She pulled out her makeup box, flat plastic containers of base and powder and rouge, and she gazed into a small, round mirror as she drew the crimson lipstick across her mouth. She was making it larger, she explained. Men liked lips that way; it was sexy. She held the lipstick lovingly, caressing her lips with it, gently expanding her lip line above and below its natural ridges. Her lips looked wet. She pursed them at the mirror, lazily stuck her tongue out and curled it to one side of her mouth, tossed her head back, and gazed into the mirror with half-closed eyes. She was thinking of tonight, of what might happen.

Elissa looked at her and ached. The pancake makeup, the hair in rollers, the glistening red mouth. Someday she would go to the Blue Spider. Someday all that excitement would be hers.

On the night before her fifteenth birthday, Elissa woke to angry shouting. She could hear her mother's voice screaming "bastard" over and over against her father's drunken laughter, a choked hollow laugh with no joy in it. Pal was whimpering at the foot of the bed. Her mother's voice grew louder and she heard her fa-

ther's voice, too, thick and angry, though she could not make out what he was saying. And then there was a crash. The voices stopped. The house was completely silent. A floorboard creaked and Pal whimpered once again, but the house remained silent the rest of the night.

The next day Beryl and Luke did not speak to one another, nor would she sit with him while he ate. When Luke returned from work, the table was set for him and Elissa, and the dinner was ready on the counter next to the stove. Beryl sat in the bedroom looking out the window. Elissa and her father ate in silence, Elissa only toying with her food. She was not hungry.

On the third day Luke said to her, "Where's your mother?"

"In the bedroom."

"Doesn't she eat at all? When does she eat?"

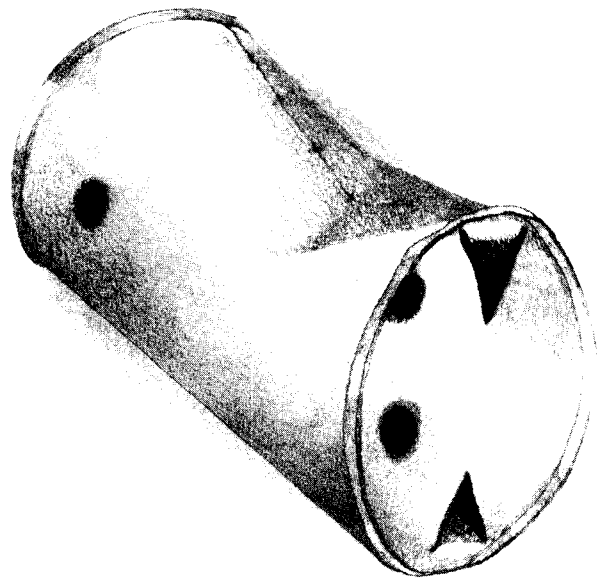
"She eats before you come home." Elissa pushed the beans around her plate with her fork. "Can't this stop?" she said. "Can't this all stop?"

She held her breath, fearing what he might say or do. But he only went on eating, mopping his plate finally with a piece of bread. He leaned over the table, his head in his hands. Elissa listened to the kitchen clock ticking, saw her father shake his head from side to side. It will always be like this, she thought; nothing will ever change. She will sit in the other room looking out the window and he will sit here with his head in his hands and I will be between them listening to the clock tick and tick and tick. She wanted to run, she wanted to scream, it was better to be dead.

Luke stopped shaking his head from side to side. He looked up from his plate, his eyes strange and wild, his face bruised-looking. He was not drunk now; she had never seen him look like this.

"Oh, Christ," he said, his face contracting, growing hard, "what's the use! What's the goddamn use!"

The next day he went back to his guns. He had three of them; two were heavy-gauge shotguns and the other was a twenty-two, revolver-size, with a snub barrel. He had not touched them since the soldiers came and he had gotten a regular job. But before that, in that endless time when there had been no work and he had a wife and daughter to support, he had spent the days hacking at the sand and stone that stretched for miles behind the tiny house, trying to coax the sterile land into producing vegetables. And at the end of the day, when they had eaten dinner, he would get out the guns. With Beryl and Elissa by his side, he would trudge to the end of the garden, where he placed tin cans on a large rock to use for target practice. He was quiet and methodical, setting up the cans and walking back to the shooting box drawn in the sand, lifting the gun to his shoulder, clicking back the safety catch, firing. Elissa would watch as his face tightened in concentration, his jaw went hard as he focused on the target, and his chest ex-



panded in a sort of sigh as the bullet struck the can and sent it spinning into the air. He would do this over and over until it grew dusky and then they went into the house. None of them enjoyed the shooting; it seemed, somehow, a necessity. He had taught Beryl to shoot the twenty-two and insisted that Elissa learn also. But all this had stopped once the soldiers came and there were jobs and money. And now he was back with his guns.

"What's he do that for, anyhow? What's he want to shoot tin cans for?" Florence narrowed her eyes and stared into the distance where Elissa's father was shooting. It was Saturday and they were doing their hair. "That makes me really jumpy, boy, that gunshot."

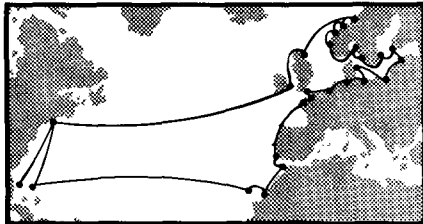
"It's just a hobby. He just does target practice."

"Jeez, your family. I'd be afraid to live here. Honest to God. With your mother in the change and everything and your old man shooting out back, I'd be afraid he'd go off his nut and shoot me. How do you know he's not gonna miss someday and hit somebody by accident?"

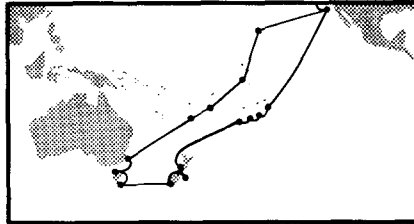
"Wait a minute. Shh." Elissa stared out across the garden at her father. "I think he called me," she said. He was waving his arm at her. "He must have," she said, and began walking toward him.

Luke was standing in a litter of tin cans holding a small bunch of purple flowers, weeds that had somehow grown through the barren soil and bloomed now in the shade of the rock Luke set the tin cans on. The stems were thick with brownish green leaves and the blossoms were small but numerous. "Here," he said, handing the flowers to Elissa. "Take them in to her."

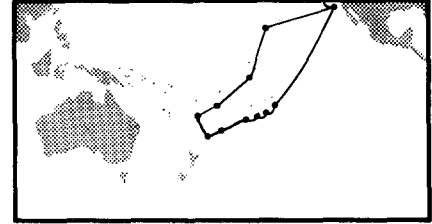
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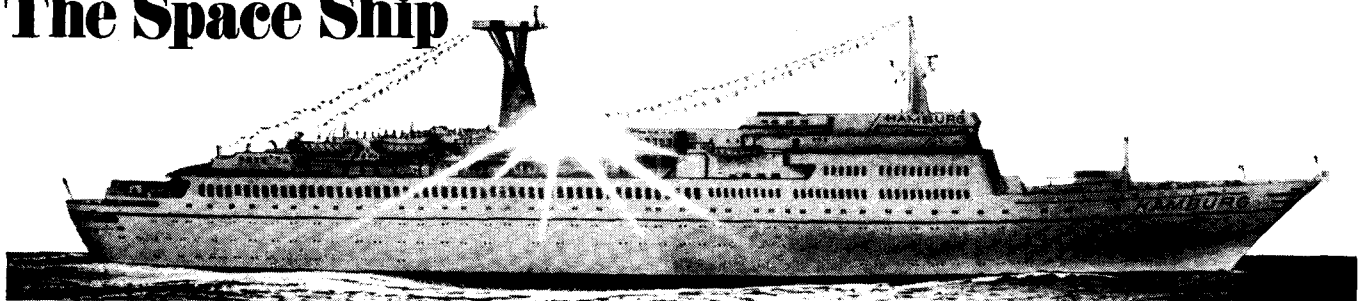
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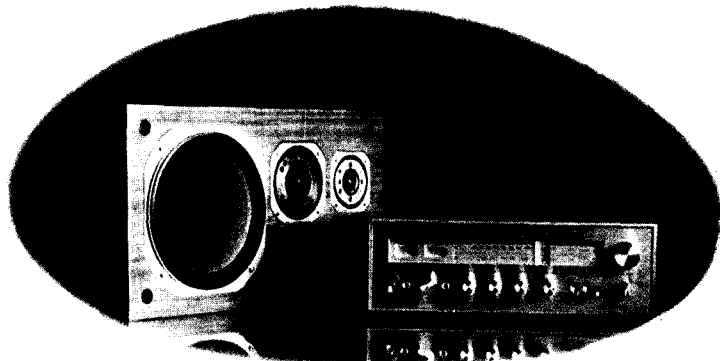
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"Should I say they're from you?"

"I don't care what you say. Say whatever you want. Just give them to her. Say, yes, you can say they're from me." He was lining up cans on the rock. He was sweating.

"I'll tell her," Elissa said.

"Oh, and kid, Elissa." He scratched his head and stared at the ground. He spoke so softly she could hardly hear him. "Tell me, uh, tell me what she says."

Elissa ran to the house, her heart pounding. It would end now, the fights and the anger and the silence.

Suddenly she was shy. She did not know how to give her mother the flowers, how to say they were from her father. She went slowly into the bedroom and stood there. Beryl was sitting with her face to the window. Her blue and white bandanna had come loose and the hair at the back of her head stuck out in little clumps; it was matted and damp at the temples. She turned and blew a stream of smoke from the corner of her mouth. Her eyes were swollen and there were dark smudges beneath them. She looked at Elissa questioningly and then she saw the flowers.

"What are those? What the hell have you got there?"

"Look." Elissa held out the bouquet to her.

Beryl began to tremble, her mouth working furiously and her eyes darting from Elissa to the door behind her and then back to the flowers.

"Where did you get those?" she said, breathless. "Are they from him? Did he tell you to bring me those?" Her voice rose; she was almost screaming. "Get those out of this house! Get them out of here! Out! Get out!" She stood up, one hand at her hair.

Elissa backed to the door. "They're only flowers. He just wanted to give you some flowers."

"Look at them. They're death flowers. Death! You put those on coffins. Don't you see? Don't you see what he wants? He wants to get rid of me. He wants me dead." She dropped her voice to a whisper. She was clutching Elissa's arm, her thumb and fingernails deep in the soft flesh. "He can get rid of me, you know. He has grounds. You can get rid of a woman like me. Once you can't have children anymore, once you're like a chicken with its guts ripped out, they can get rid of you. He'd like to, too, that's what he wants."

"He just wanted to make up. He just wanted to give you the flowers."

Elissa pulled away from her but Beryl continued on, talking rapidly, in a whisper, her words piling on one another.

"You're with him too. You're like him. The both of you, you want to drive me crazy. You want me to go crazy and then you can get rid of me. Bringing me those flowers. Death flowers." She began to scream again. "Get them out of here. Get out."

Elissa ran out of the house and stood on the back porch, white and gasping for breath. Inside she could hear her mother sobbing wildly. Florence was staring at her, motionless, one hand gently touching the pink rollers on her head, the other suspended halfway to her mouth. Somewhere in the distance her father was waiting. And all she could feel was the sun, beating heavily on her head and shoulders, numbing her entire body. There was a terrible crashing sound in her head, rhythmic and painfully loud, like a gunshot. But it was not a gunshot; it was something inside her head and it would not stop. Florence was saying something, but she could not hear it.

"Wait. Wait," she said, "it'll stop."

Florence watched her come stiffly down the stairs, walking as if she were in a trance. Her arms hung limply by her sides and the flowers in her left hand trailed along the ground as step by step she approached her father. He was standing with one foot on the rock, staring off into the space that stretched out forever behind the house. As she approached him, he turned and saw the flowers. He made a sound that was half laughter and half groan.

"She didn't want them?"

"No."

"What did she say? Did you say they were from me?"

"She said to get them out of the house."

"But did she say why?"

"She said they were death flowers. She said you wanted her dead, because . . . She said you wanted to drive her crazy, that we both did."

Luke's face went gray and he put the gun down carefully against the rock. He began walking toward the house. Elissa ran after him.

"No, oh please no," she said. "Don't say anything to her. Don't do anything. Please. Please no."

She was snatching at his sleeve but he pushed her away and kept on, a furious determined walk. She turned and went back to the rock where he had left the rifle. She picked it up and held it in position, the butt against her shoulder, her eye at the site. She turned the barrel toward the house, toward Florence, but Florence had gone home. Without thinking, she sited the kitchen window and waited and waited, and then pressed the trigger. Nothing happened. She had forgotten to release the safety catch.

Voices came to her now; she could hear them shouting. The word "crazy" drifted toward her on the windless air and then "bastard." She shook her head; she would not listen.

And then—she did not know why—she turned the rifle so that the barrel pointed to her chest. She reached for the trigger, but her arms were not long enough. She crouched. She placed the gunstock on the ground. Nothing worked.

Yes, she thought, you'd have to use your toe.

You put the stock on the ground, the barrel at your chest, and you push the trigger back, away from you, with a toe. It would work perfectly.

She smiled at the thought and then looked around, suddenly self-conscious. She put the rifle back, leaning it against the rock just as it had been, and she walked slowly to the house.

“Look, kid, you can go if you want to, but if your father ever finds out, don’t come crying to me.”

Beryl had said this to her late at night on that same Saturday Elissa had brought her the death flowers, and now it was Saturday again, and she had been going to the Blue Spider for almost a year.

Elissa stood in front of the bathroom mirror touching her hair. She wore it in immense curls that tumbled about her head, some of them only half combed out, still springy from the rollers. Florence wore her hair this way; it was the fashion, she said. Florence helped her with everything. She had taught Elissa how to spread the thick layer of pancake makeup evenly over her face and how to blend in the little dot of rouge so that her cheekbones stood out flushed against all that pink. She had helped her pick the peasant blouse, elasticized at the shoulders, and the plaid skirt, yards and yards of material that swirled around her when she danced and that concealed her thin legs and hips. And she had taught her how to act at the Blue Spider. She called Elissa Cookie and Elissa called her Candy. The soldiers liked their names.

She continued to pose before the mirror, distracted from her own image by the thought of Len.

She had met him on her first Saturday at the Blue Spider. They danced once or twice that night, but she did not remember him a week later; she had been too excited, too confused. Everyone seemed to like her. They laughed and drank and danced. How could she have remembered one soldier out of so many? But when he reminded her that they had danced together only a week earlier, she was embarrassed and grateful. She fell in love with him at once. And now, every Saturday night, they drifted together early in the evening, kissing and touching in the booths and on the way home.

“He loves me,” she said aloud to the mirror. She touched her hair one last time and then put on the soft pink lipstick her mother liked; she would put on the deep red just before she reached Finial Street.

“Don’t get in trouble, you,” her mother said.

“Oh, ma.”

“And you better get home before he does. If he finds out, he’ll kill you.”

“I’m always home before he is. Don’t worry.”

Beryl watched her daughter walk down the dirt

road, her hips swaying, her curls tossing with the movements of her head. “You look nice, Elissa,” she said to herself, and then turned away, back to her empty house. Pal was in her way, sniffing at the screen door. “Get out of here, damn you,” she said. “Smelly damn dog.”

At Finial Street they were waiting for Elissa in the jeep, but Len was not with them. The two soldiers in back made room for her and even before



she sat down the jeep roared away. One soldier had his arm around her shoulders, the other put his hand on her knee; she settled in comfortably between them.

“Isn’t Len coming tonight?” She tried to sound casual.

“Hey, is Len coming tonight?” The soldier repeated her question, laughter in his voice. He tightened his grip on her shoulder.

“I don’t know. Is Len coming tonight?” The other picked up the question, nudging her leg with his.

“What’s the joke?” she said. “What the hell’s so funny?” She leaned forward. “Hey, Candy, what the hell’s so funny?”

“Wouldn’t you like to know?” Florence said, rolling her eyes.

“Come on, tell me.”

Florence leaned back and whispered in her ear. “Len’s gonna get a car. And you know what *that* means.” She laughed wildly, rocking from side to side, wriggling against the driver. Elissa tossed back her head and began to sing the “Pocaluma Polka.” It was going to be a perfect night. Nothing could spoil it. She was still singing when they reached the Blue Spider and went in.

Elissa was thrilled by the air of excitement in the place. Everyone was in motion, talking and laughing. There were some girls in the booths already, but most of them were dancing, and soldiers were lounging against the jukebox waiting for their turn. Someone called to her from one of the back booths. She waved to him and laughed. She was dancing, gliding backward to the heavy beat of the music, humming. She could feel the soldier's hands moving on her shoulder and at the small of her back. She didn't care. Let him. She was dancing with someone else now; she could feel his thighs against hers. She was floating, and always there was the music blaring and bodies touching hers. She was safe here. She was alive. Someone handed her a can of beer and she was surprised at the sharp bitter taste. She took a long slug from the can and everyone applauded.

"Jesus, are you ever the one!" Florence said to her, and then she whispered something to one of the soldiers. They laughed together and then he whispered to her. "You pig," she said, and pushed against his chest with her fist, laughing. They sat down in a booth.

Len had come in and was standing by the jukebox waiting for the music to stop. They were dancing to the "Chicken Bop" and every few steps the girl would pull away from the boy and do a little hop. It was a popular dance because it gave the girls a chance to show what they were made of, Len had once told her. Elissa moved away from her partner, hopped, and returned. He grinned and said, "What've you got down there?" He pulled at the elastic on her blouse.

"Pig," she said. She was flirting more than she would have if she had seen Len come in.

She swung out from her partner once again, did her little hop, and returned, and this time he said, "You've really got something. Let's take a look." And he pulled again at the elastic. The blouse slipped from her left shoulder and she pushed it back easily with a flick of her thumb. But she was annoyed.

"Come on," she said. "Cut it."

The dance was about to end. "I'll be good," he said. He held her tight against him, but when she swung out and returned for the last time, like a small boy he said, "Just one little peek," and he pulled at the elastic.

She stopped dancing and stood there. "Now look what you done," she said. The elastic had broken and her blouse drooped low on the left shoulder.

"Let's see, let's see," he said, being funny. The music had stopped and everyone was beginning to stare.

"Come on, let's get out of here," Len said. He came between her and her partner.

"Hey, hold on there, soldier," he said. "You stealing my little girlfriend here?" And he pushed Len to the side.

"Look at this. Look what he done," Elissa was saying. "How can I go home with my blouse like this?"

"Quit shoving," Len said to the soldier, and took Elissa by the arm.

The soldier spun him around. "You didn't answer my question, friend. You stealing my little girlfriend here?" He waited for an answer. "Huh?" He pushed Len in the chest with the flat of his hand. "Huh?" Another push. "What do you say, soldier boy?"

The crowd around them had fallen silent, the faces hungry for a fight. Len glanced at them and knew what was expected of him. But he didn't want a fight. Not now.

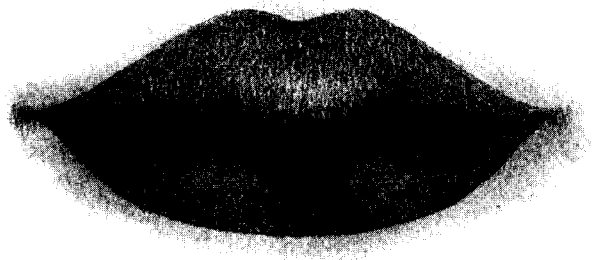
"Don't try that again," he said, and spat on the floor.

"Try what? Try this?" He pushed Len harder. "Why, this is the easiest thing in the world, no trying involved." He pushed him harder still.

And then before anyone knew what happened, before anyone could holler "fight," Len lashed out with his right fist and caught the soldier on the side of the head. He lurched back, but as he fell he struck the other side of his head on one of the upright beams. It made only a dull thudding sound. He slid down the beam to a sitting position, a look of surprise on his face, blood beginning to drip from the side of his head. Len took Elissa's arm and pushed her to the door.

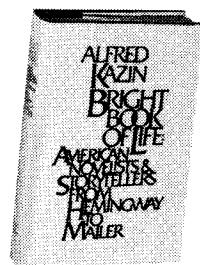
"Hey, no rough stuff," the bartender was shouting. Everyone was talking loudly. "Who got hit?" "Who did it?"

They stood for a moment outside the door, Elissa holding the blouse together with her hand. They were breathless, flushed with excitement.



QUOTE:

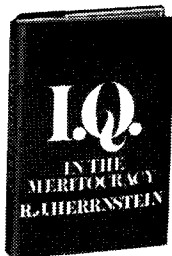
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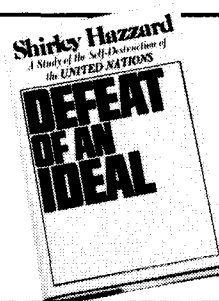


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"I got a car," Len said.

"I know it."

He paused and she stood there fiddling with the material of her blouse.

"Do you want to?"

"Yes. Do you?"

Laughing, they ran to the car.

"Yellow bastard," they heard the soldier shout as they drove off. "Come on back and fight, you bastard."

They drove out of town, out beyond the houses and the fields and the base, deep into the pocked and sweltering desert. They were silent the whole way, an odd formality between them. Finally Len stopped the car and they got out.

"This looks all right," he said. "What do you think?"

"Yes, this is fine," she said. What had happened? He was a stranger, she thought; he was just someone else she did not know. But I love him and he loves me. We're going to make love, she told herself, trying to recapture the excitement of the Blue Spider. He was naked now, standing on the blanket he had spread over the sand. He was caressing his fat stomach.

"Come on," he said. "Get those clothes off, for Christ sake. We haven't got all night."

They made love and afterward she said, "Is that all?" It had happened so quickly, just a brief hard pain that spread upward, taking her breath away, and then nothing more.

"What do you mean, is that all?"

"I mean, should we go home now?"

"Oh, yeah," he said. And as he picked up the blanket and walked to the car, he added, "Hey, uh, thanks a lot."

"That's all right," she said.

They were silent as he drove her home.

Luke had been home for more than an hour. He had gone upstairs and sat, waiting, on Elissa's bed and then he had come down.

"Where is she?" he asked Beryl.

"She's out for a walk. She was too hot up there."

"Yeah, I hear she's hot up there. I hear she's hot down at the Blue Spider, too."

"Who says?" He was drunk, she knew, but canny drunk. It was best not to antagonize him. "Men gossip," she said, "they just make things up."

"My own daughter, a friggin whore. I have to hear about it at the Oaks. My wife don't tell me. Oh no, she's helping her do it."

"Who said . . ."

"It's been going on for a year, they tell me. 'Hey, Gerriter,' he says to me, 'I hear your daughter's getting it plenty.' I call him a dirty liar and he says, 'No, it's true.' So I'm gonna punch him in

the face and they tell me, 'No, Gerriter, it's true. She's down there every Saturday.' And there I was listening to them laugh about my own daughter. I'll teach her. I'll beat her to an inch of her life."

"I let her go. I'm the one. I said she could go as long as she got home before you did. So if you're gonna blame anybody, it's me."

"Yeah, I should beat you too. I should have years ago."

"You're not going to beat anybody, Luke Gerriter. Get that straight."

"I'm not gonna be made a fool of by my own daughter. I'm gonna teach her a lesson." He stormed into the kitchen and took a beer from the refrigerator. Beryl followed him.

They stared at each other in silence for a moment and then Luke took a long slug from the beer can.

Beryl spoke very slowly. "If you put a hand on her, I warn you, I'll kill you." She continued to stare at him for a moment and then she went to the bedroom.

She sat by the window trembling. They had not fought for almost a year now, not since the day he had sent Elissa to her with the flowers. She had changed since then, she knew it. Something strange had happened inside her and she found herself, despite the stored anger between them, wanting him, wanting him with her in bed. She could not tell him this, but there were times when she ached, when she lay in bed listening to him snore and had to keep herself from going to his cot and saying, "Come to bed with me, I want you." And now it was all going to change again, within an hour, as soon as Elissa got home. She could foresee it, the accusations, the heavy hands, the screaming. She shook her head to clear it.

In the kitchen Luke had finished his beer and took down from the pantry shelf the bottle of whiskey he kept there. He sat at the kitchen table and watched the whiskey rise in the tumbler; he filled it only half full. He put his head on the table to rest, to wait for her. As the time passed and the whiskey sank in the bottle, he wept for himself as a betrayed father, for his daughter being used by filthy soldiers, for everything. He would grow angry and violent, pace around the kitchen, cursing and threatening to beat her half to death. And after a while he would sit down again. He dozed fitfully. By the time the small gray car turned off Fennial Street onto the dirt road, Luke had finished most of the bottle and was thoroughly, violently, drunk.

The car stopped in front of the house and the two people inside sat there in silence. They had not spoken once since leaving the desert. Finally Len cleared his throat.

"Um, there's something I should tell you. I'm being shipped out soon."

"Oh." As if she had expected it.

"Yeah, this week. Maybe I should have told you before. Maybe you wouldn't have wanted to do it."

"No, that's all right," she said.

"Well, anyway, it was, um, great."

"Yes," she said.

She got out of the car and closed the door softly.

"See you around," he said and drove off, fast.

"That's all right," she said, and drifted toward the door, her hand at the shoulder of her torn blouse. Vaguely she noticed that the light was on behind the screen door. She couldn't breathe very well. She stopped by the evergreen tree, bending into its spiky branches to inhale the bitter smell. The screen door creaked, but she did not turn around.

Her head jerked sharply back and there was a tearing pain in her shoulder as Luke grabbed her arm from behind and pulled her into the light.

"Look at you, you whore, you pig," he said softly, staring at the curls and the makeup and the crimson slash at her mouth. He slapped her hard on the face. In the silence, the crack of his hand against her skin was like a gunshot and involuntarily he drew away from her, hesitating for a moment. And then he saw the blouse. "Look, look!" he said. "Is that what happens in the cars, huh? They can't wait to get at you so they have to rip your clothes off."

Elissa backed away from him. He was crazy drunk. He might do anything.

"Or do you like it that way? Damned whore," he said. "Some like it that way. Do you? Huh? Do you like it?" And with one hand he reached out and tore her blouse down the front. His anger grew as he looked at her. "Look at you," he screamed. "Look at you." He tore at her brassiere, and as she struggled it came loose in his hand. She stood stripped to the waist in the light shining through the screen door. "Whore," he said, "pig," and slapped at her breasts, pulling her closer and closer to him as they struggled. She was screaming, pushing him away, and he was calling her whore, whore, while his neck and chest heaved with the violence of what he was doing. He felt fists on his back and he heard someone calling his name and then something struck his head.

"Luke, Luke," Beryl was saying. "Luke."

He took his hands from Elissa and turned, with the face of a stranger, to Beryl. He looked at her, confused.

"Get in the house," she said, her voice firm and low.

"She . . ." Luke said, pointing to his daughter.

"I know. Get in the house."

Luke went up the stairs slowly, bent like an old man, never having noticed the pistol in her hand.

Elissa and Beryl looked at one another, uncertain, questioning.

"Nothing happened, did it," Beryl said. Elissa continued to look at her. "Nothing happened," she insisted.

"No. Nothing happened."

"I know," Beryl said, "I know," and she threw her arms around the girl, sobbing uncontrollably. "Nothing happened. Nothing. Nothing happened."

It was almost October and still the heat was unbearable. Luke wiped the sweat from his forehead with the back of his hand and then mopped his plate with a piece of bread, swooping down on it to catch the drippings.

"How come she's sick again?" he asked. "What's the matter with her?"

Beryl pushed back her plate. "You want another beer?" She rose to get it.

"What's the matter with the kid?"

She placed the beer can at his side and sat down at the table facing him. "She's pregnant."

"Oh no," he said, and groaned.

"She told me this afternoon. She's over three months."

Luke sat staring at his empty plate, his hands at his head. After a minute Beryl saw his shoulders shake. He was crying.

"How do you think I felt?" she said. "I told her she's gonna be punished and good. I feel like she tore something right out of me, like she killed something I had, the only thing I had."

His shoulders shook again. He said nothing.

The clock ticked above the table. They could hear Pal upstairs, as his nails clicked against the wooden floor. Finally Beryl couldn't stand the silence any longer.

"It's not yours," she said.

He looked up at her, shocked.

"It's not your baby. I asked her."

He shook his head and looked back down at his plate. In the three months that had passed since he beat Elissa, none of them ever mentioned what had happened.

"Well, I had to know, didn't I? After that . . ."

"Yes," he said. She could barely hear it.

"Do you want to know something? Do you?" There was fright in her voice and he looked up at her finally.

"What?"

"Do you know what I felt first of all? I was jealous."

He stared at her.

"You don't know what it's been like," she said. "Oh Jesus, sometimes I want to just die."

"It's not mine," he said. "I was drunk that time. I didn't know what I was doing."

"I know," she said. "Nothing happened anyway."

There was a long silence between them and, tentatively, she moved her arm forward on the table until her fingers touched his.

"Can I tell you something?" she said.

He moved one of his fingers against hers.

"Sometimes I want it now. With you."

After a long moment he took her hand in his. "Oh Christ," he said, "what a mess." And for the first time in years, they went to the bedroom to make love.

Upstairs Elissa lay in her bed, one arm across her stomach. She studied the boards in the slanted roof above her head and whenever Pal put his muzzle against her, she scratched behind his ears. But she noticed nothing, was aware of nothing.

At first, after that night with Len, she had tried to understand what had happened. He didn't love her, she knew that, but that hadn't mattered. Not that he was going away either. It was something different. Everything seemed to have come to an end—the excitement of going to the Spider, men brushing against her, touching her, knowing that something was going to happen, that it was all going to be different. But nothing was going to be different now. By the time she discovered she was pregnant, not even that mattered very much. That seemed only to prove what she already knew. She was trapped forever in the sweltering heat, fighting for a breath of air.

Around midnight they awoke and made love once again. Luke collapsed against her, breathing hard, and then rolled away, half asleep already.

"She's got to be punished," Beryl said. "She's got to be taught a lesson."

"I'll shoot her dog," Luke said. "She loves the dog."

"No. No, that's not enough."

There was a moment of silence.

"I'll make her shoot it," he said.

"Tomorrow."

Before dawn Luke walked to town and borrowed the Garners' car. He was back before the sun was fully up. Beryl had prepared a large breakfast for them and they ate it, as they always did, in silence.

Afterward Beryl said, "I told your father."

"You've got to be punished," he said. "You know that."

Elissa pushed her hair back from her face but said nothing.

"We're gonna shoot that dog of yours. You're gonna shoot it, that is. You're gonna take us out to where he did it and you're gonna show us the exact spot and then you're gonna shoot that dog."

"You killed something I had," Beryl said, "and now you're gonna do the same."

Elissa nodded. It was all crazy. Nothing mattered.

The sun was high when they passed the last of the farms and took the road to the air base.

"Left here," Elissa said, numb. She stroked the dog and looked out the window. Miles and miles of sand, with the sun beating down. Nothing could live here.

"Where is it?" Luke said. "It must be around here somewhere."

How could you tell? she thought; everything was the same. In a few minutes she said, "Here. Here's the place."

They got out of the car and stood by it awkwardly, looking around them. No one would ever hear a gunshot out here. They walked a long distance from the car until Luke said, "Where are you going? I thought you said it was here?"

"Yes, it is here. It's right here."

Luke drove a stake deep into the sand and tied the dog's leash to it. He walked five paces distant, readying the gun. He cocked it, examined the shells, snapped it shut. Only twenty-twos, but at such close range enough to kill a dog. He released the safety catch and handed Elissa the pistol.

"Do it," he said. "Do it or we just drive off and leave you. It's your punishment."

Luke and Beryl moved off and stood at a distance, watching.

Elissa looked at the pistol, turned it over in her hand, and then looked at Pal, who wagged his tail and tried to come to her. She looked up at the sky into the blinding sun and thought she saw a cloud coming, perhaps it meant rain, but it was just the sun against her eyes and when she looked back at Pal she saw only a blazing dog shape against the sand. Slowly, evenly, she raised the small gun, placing the barrel firmly beneath her right ear.

The only sound in the desert was the dog whimpering in the terrible heat. □

LIFE & LETTERS

CHEEVER TO ROTH TO MALAMUD

by John Leonard

I happen to believe that John Cheever is our best living writer of short stories: a Chekhov of the ex-urbs. This view is not commonly shared. Critics tend to take an avuncular attitude toward Cheever; they have already written their one review of him and stashed it away in a drawer, waiting for the next book. Anyone who writes so clearly and so well, about such ordinary matters as marriage and children, cannot be presumed to be highly serious. He must be trying to glide by on charm.

See how effortlessly he goes about his business in this new collection. He enters his stories the way the rest of us leave our homes, opening the door, stepping out, getting rained on by the day. The awareness of each story seems random; it is composed of what is noticed. But watch: the noticing begins to fix on discrepancies. What is perceived is out of synch with what is felt. What is said is so often wholly inappropriate to the circumstances—women, usually, say those awful things in Cheever's fiction—that the story becomes a mugging. It's as if we had agreed to pretend that politeness is reality; then rudeness, aggression, attack not only our notion of ourselves but our notion of how the universe is supposed to be organized. Yeats asked, "How but in custom and ceremony/ Are innocence and beauty born?" Cheever was after something similar in *Bullet Park* when he talked about "that sense of sanctuary that is the es-

sence of love." The people whom he allows to tell his stories—men, always, in *The World of Apples* (Knopf, \$5.95)—find no sanctuary. Custom and ceremony are in shambles. Innocence and beauty are remembered, not experienced; and even the memories are suspect: what is being remembered is the desire for innocence, beauty, and sanctuary, rather than the fulfillment. And what remains after the stories have gone is the watermark on the day's page, the blood-vein in the mugger's eyelid: chance and terror.

And yet it is all accomplished with a casual left-handedness. Consider these beginnings, these doors opening on stories: "Reminiscence, along with the cheese boards and ugly pottery sometimes given to brides, seems to have a manifest destiny with the sea." "Artemis loved the healing sound of rain." "The first time I robbed Tiffany's, it was raining." "The subject today will be the metaphysics of obesity, and I am the belly of a man named Lawrence Farnsworth." "It was one of those rainy late afternoons when the toy department of Woolworth's on Fifth Avenue is full of women who appear to have been taken in adultery and who are now shopping for a present to carry home to their youngest child."

What is happening? We never hear about a second or third robbing of Tiffany's; we hear instead about an abusive servant and the old lady she reviles; at the moment of death, they learn that they

are daughter and mother. Mr. Farnsworth's belly is a witty trifle of a story, exactly what Philip Roth could have made out of *The Breast* if he had been able to control himself and resist the silicone injections. The rain will have to heal Artemis; his Russian love is interdicted by our State Department. What began in the toy department of Woolworth's ends with the death of a man who has canceled himself out by trying to solve the problem of his wife's unhappiness with Euclidean geometry.

In other stories, a husband objects to his wife's simulating sexual acts on a stage, naked; refusing to join her and others in a "love pile," he discovers "some marvelously practical and obdurate part of myself," but he loses his wife. A middle-aged man with an unhappy marriage conjures up a phantom, a chimera of a young girl who needs his "love, strength and counsel"—only to lose even this. An expatriate returns to America to find that the walls of our public buildings are scrawled over with a new kind of graffiti, florid writing about Roman banquets, haunted manor houses, and geraniums—"What had happened, I suppose, was that, as pornography moved into the public domain, those marble walls, those immemorial repositories of such sport, had been forced, in self-defense, to take up the more refined task of literature"—and flees back to Europe. A woman who has lost three husbands to traffic accidents starts shooting

truck drivers with a rifle. A kitten is ground up in a kitchen blender.

Loss, and various forms of mourning. Love, but never enough of it to "quite anneal the divisive power of pain." Here is an elderly poet remembering his boyhood on a farm in Vermont, and a natural fall of water: "He had gone there one Sunday afternoon when he was a boy and sat on a hill above the pool. While he was there he saw an old man, with hair as thick and white as his was now, come through the woods. He had watched the old man unlace his shoes and undress himself with the haste of a lover. First he had wet his hands and arms and shoulders and then he had stepped into the torrent, bellowing with joy. He had then dried himself with his underpants, dressed, and gone back into the woods and it was not until he disappeared that Bascomb had realized that the old man was his father."

Compare that with another story, a bitter vignette that breaks the heart. A man takes an aisle seat on a 707 for Rome. He is presentable, charming, likes people and is liked by them. There is a beautiful woman of his own age in the window seat. The middle seat is unoccupied. For the nine hours of the flight he tries to talk to her; she is rude and distant, refusing even the most civil of intimacies, seems actively hostile toward him. He does not understand. Neither does the reader. We come to the final paragraph. They have landed:

"But look, look. Why does he point out her bag to the porter and why, when they both have their bags, does he follow her out to the cab stand, where he bargains with a driver for the trip into Rome? Why does he join her in the cab? Is he the undiscourageable masher that she dreaded? No, no. He is her husband, she is his wife, the mother of his children, and a woman he has worshipped passionately for nearly thirty years."

I reread the story, and someone had applied the tip of a knife to my pineal gland: Cheever, touching the spot where the mind and the body were once supposed to connect, nicking it, passing on.

Now consider these desires, expressed in the stories: "Should I stand up in the theater and shout



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(Advertisement)

June Report on

Atlantic Monthly Press books



Does AGNES DE MILLE need an introduction?

We hope not—not at least to readers of this magazine, who will remember her articles, starting in 1950 with her brilliant portrait of Martha Graham and leading most recently to her 1970 article, "Judgment in Moscow." Even new subscribers will have heard of the great choreographer who brought a distinctly American idiom to the classic ballet in *Oklahoma*, *Carousel*, *Brigadoon*, *Rodeo*, and countless other musicals and original ballets.

Written with the style and vitality of her dances, **SPEAK TO ME, DANCE WITH ME** is Miss de Mille's story of her first years on her own, struggling to establish herself as a dancer. On the tiny stage of the Mercury Theatre in London, she danced alongside other beginners such as Antony Tudor, Frederick Ashton, and Diana Gould. Her first big break came when she created the dances for Cole Porter's *Nymph Errant*, starring Gertrude Lawrence. She tried out for her uncle Cecil's *Cleopatra*, dancing almost naked on the back of a bull; he declared the result not sexy enough! And she fell in love with a highly intelligent but crippled Englishman; their affair graces the pages of her book like a lyrical but ultimately tragic song.

Agnes de Mille needs no introduction, but if you want to find out how her road to preeminence began—or if you simply want to read a lively book which brings back the flavor of the theater, dance, and movie world of the early thirties—then read *Speak to Me, Dance with Me*.

SPEAK TO ME, DANCE WITH ME

by Agnes de Mille

\$8.95 at your bookstore

LITTLE, BROWN

for her to return, return, return in the name of love, humor and serenity?" "But God, oh, God, how much I then wanted some kind of loveliness, softness, gentleness, humor, sweetness, kindness." "Was there such hidden balance and clemency in the universe that our needs were always requited?" "If we are any less than shrewd, courageous, and honest with ourselves we are contemptible." "Were the Littletons making for themselves, by contorting their passions into an acceptable social image, a sort of prison, or did they chance to be a man and woman whose pleasure in one another was tender, robust and invincible?" "One felt that they might live together with intelligence and ardor—giving and taking until death did them part." "No amount of ignominy or venom could make parting from [his wife and children] imaginable. As he thought of them, they seemed to be the furniture of his soul, its lintel and roof-tree." "One could disparage them as homely but they were the best he knew of life—anxiety and love." "His return to Monte Carbone was triumphant and in the morning he began a long poem on the inalienable dignity of light and air."

I like these words, and the emotions they invoke—love, humor, serenity, sweetness, strength, clemency, intelligence, ardor, soul. They aren't used much, or they are not used honestly, in books by Cheever's peers. Irony has deformed these words; they have become indices of simplemindedness; their profession is excused, or traduced, as a black joke. There is, of course, no escaping irony. It is an indispensable tool for writers of twentieth-century fiction, part of the surgical bag, like sex, ennui, paranoia, and a contempt for your readers. But it isn't absolutely necessary to use irony as a club for bludgeoning your characters into submission; writers who use truncheons are fearful of themselves.

Irony can be used the way Cheever uses it: protectively, on behalf of ardor and intelligence and clemency, even while these words, these values really, are inadequate to cope with a world of chance, of evil. Inside Cheever's irony, love and humor are preserved, not abused. A sadness obtains. His fic-

tion has consistently been about a certain failure of reciprocity in our relations with the rest of the universe. (Women, especially, are unknowable and chancy; I suppose someone will write a tract about it, missing the point.) What we don't know, didn't expect, and can't understand overwhelms our decent impulses. We lose. We are not, however, ugly for losing. And the rain tries to heal.

After several years of fiddling around—*Our Gang*, *The Breast*—Philip Roth has gotten back to useful work. *The Great American Novel* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, \$8.95) isn't. It couldn't be, even substituting baseball for the whale. Contemporary writers lack the nerve, if not the energy, for such an enterprise. (Irony, again, consuming itself and all our fabrications.) But it is a hugely inventive, often brilliant, very funny book that collapses into giggles and splinters two-thirds of the way through. Roth can't sustain it. I don't know who could have.

We have a third major league in baseball: the Patriot League. Its cities have names like Port Ruppert, Kakoola, Aceldama, Asylum. Its heroes have names like Luke Gofannon. It will not survive World War II, for reasons too complicated to go into right now. Its story is told by an Ishmael named Word Smith, ex-sportswriter, ex-ghost of presidential speeches, last honest man.

The best part of *The Great American Novel* is Roth's account of one wartime season in the life of the Patriot League, when the once proud Ruppert Mundys have to play all of their 154 games on the road because their stadium has been leased to the government as an embarkation camp for troops on their way overseas. The Mundys are an awful team—most of them over the hill, some with limbs missing, at one point two midgets on the same roster—but they are superbly realized by Roth. We drag through the season with them, losing every game they lose twice over. (One game they do manage to win, an exhibition against a team made up of inmates from a lunatic asylum, is the most hilarious contest ever committed to print—and that includes Mordechai Richler's softball game

in *St. Urbain's Horseman*.) As baseball novels go, and they go surprisingly well, *The Great American Novel* finishes first, with Bernard Malamud, Robert Coover, and Mark Harris close behind. This may be the moment to wonder why so many talented American writers are so obsessed by baseball, and why they all seem to mourn it. But I won't.

Listening in on Roth has always been like listening in on the paranoia of the nation, by car radio at night somewhere on top of a mountain. The signals are coming from every synapse in the continental nervous system. Roth hears it all, twists it to his advantage. The prose is electric; the static is dangerous. Talk is the ache of wounds. No other writer I know of has Roth's ear, or his mouth, the clenched teeth through which a scream is trying to whistle. Of venality, defeat, humiliation, he knows everything. He has looked at the myth—well, if sport is our only source of binding symbols, baseball is better than football—and seen that it is tar paper. The shack falls down under the weight of history. The children who believed in the myth are buried, crushed, inside.

But he had to turn the destruction of the Patriot League into a Communist plot. He had to bring on the Dies Committee and the NKVD. He had to force a political grid on top of his story and score it like a waffle. I know, I know: he's trying to work conspiracy theories against myths, explode them both, and all the energy of paranoia is devoted to doing the job. It exhausts his book. I don't for a moment believe the last chapters of *The Great American Novel*, while the season was as real as the one we're into now. The invention is too desperate, and the political intelligence is too conventional, for any of this to matter.

If Roth had left well enough alone—let the season of the Ruppert Mundys stand for the season of America—his novel would have had the precision his critics are always saying he lacks. (Remember the critic who said on the front page of a prominent literary magazine that *Portnoy's Complaint* was the book "every Jewish writer has wanted to write"? Remember Stanley Edgar

The Lazy Man's Way to Riches

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For example, this ad took about 2 hours to write. With a little luck, it should earn me 50, maybe a hundred thousand dollars.

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After all, why should you care if I make \$9.50 profit if I can show you how to make a *lot* more?

What if I'm so sure that you *will* make money my Lazy Man's Way that I'll make you the world's most unusual guarantee?

And here it is: I won't even cash your check or money order for 31 days *after* I've sent you my material.

That'll give you plenty of time to get it, look it over, try it out.

If you don't agree that it's worth at least a hundred times what you invested, send it back. Your *uncashed* check or money order will be put in the return mail.

The only reason I won't send it to you and bill you or send it C.O.D. is because both these methods involve more time and money.

And I'm already going to give you the biggest bargain of your life.

Because I'm going to tell you what it took me 11 years to perfect: How to make money the Lazy Man's Way.

O.K.—now I have to brag a little. I don't mind it. And it's necessary—to prove that sending me the 10 dollars... which I'll keep "in escrow" until you're satisfied... is the smartest thing you ever did.

I live in a home that's worth \$100,000. I know it is, because I turned down an offer for that much. My mortgage is less than half that, and the only reason I haven't paid it off is because my Tax Accountant says I'd be an idiot.

My "office," about a mile and a half from my home, is right on the beach. My view is so breathtaking that most people comment that they don't see how I get any work done. But I do enough. About 6 hours a day, 8 or 9 months a year.

The rest of the time we spend at our mountain "cabin." I paid \$30,000 for it—cash.

I have 2 boats and a Cadillac. All paid for.

We have stocks, bonds, investments, cash in the bank. But the most important thing I have is priceless: time with my family.

And I'll show you just how I did it—the Lazy Man's Way—a secret that I've shared with just a few friends 'til now.

It doesn't require "education." I'm a high school graduate.

It doesn't require "capital." When I started out, I was so deep in debt that a lawyer friend advised bankruptcy as the only way out. He was wrong. We paid off our debts and, outside of the mortgage, don't owe a cent to any man.

It doesn't require "luck." I've had

more than my share, but I'm not promising you that you'll make as much money as I have. And you may do better; I personally know one man who used these principles, worked hard, and made 11 million dollars in 8 years. But money isn't everything.

It doesn't require "talent." Just enough brains to know what to look for. And I'll tell you that.

It doesn't require "youth." One woman I worked with is over 70. She's travelled the world over, making all the money she needs, doing only what I taught her.

It doesn't require "experience." A widow in Chicago has been averaging \$25,000 a year for the past 5 years, using my methods.

What *does* it require? Belief. Enough to take a chance. Enough to absorb what I'll send you. Enough to put the principles into *action*. If you do just that—nothing more, nothing less—the results *will* be hard to believe. Remember—I guarantee it.

You don't have to give up your job. But you may soon be making so much money that you'll be able to. Once again—I guarantee it.

The wisest man I ever knew told me something I never forgot: "Most people are too busy earning a living to make any money."

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Hyman quoting that critic, and then gently asking him in a parenthesis, "Lionel Trilling?" So much for criticism.) But Roth's manic genius never permits him to leave well enough alone; he worries it. He paws, he chews, he sniffs, he is too easily distracted. He even introduces a Jewish child prodigy who tries to coach the Mundys according to the statistical principles of Earnshaw Cook's *Percentage Baseball*. Which means we'll have seven long articles next year in *Commentary* magazine on "Jews and the Baseball Problem." He shouldn't have done it.

The Great American Novel is worth the price of admission—Roth is better than he's ever been before—but you may want to leave before the final dog act.

Bernard Malamud is like an old bear in his cave who spends each winter dreaming up new things to do in the spring. Each book is astonishingly different from the last. Malamud's ambition is enormous: baseball, Russian political prisoners, relations between blacks and Jews. *Rembrandt's Hat* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$6.95) is his first collection of stories in ten years, and it is Malamud in a minor key; the growls are *sotto voce*.

This is a book of messages. A young man whose father is dying receives a soiled card: "Heal the Sick. Save the Dying. Make a Silver Crown." He orders a silver crown and his wish, terrifyingly, is granted. A widower traveling in the Soviet Union receives some pages from his cabdriver. They are short stories, and the widower is expected to smuggle them out to a Western publisher. Another young man with a father in the hospital is asked by an inmate to mail a letter for him; it contains nothing but blank sheets of paper, and there is no address on the envelope. Another widower, a doctor, finds a letter in his apartment building that was intended for someone else—a young woman. He will be humiliated. The young wife of a professor of architecture passes notes to a former student during a dinner party; he will be disappointed and perhaps frightened. A father reads his son's mail, trying to understand him. A talking horse—a man inside a horse? not quite—answers messages that are tapped on

his skull by the mute who owns him. (A wonderful story, shorter than Roth's breast, longer than Cheever's belly: where do we go from here?) A sculptor's hat is a sign of pride and fear; it must be read by an art historian before the man can be understood.

Messages, but not much communication. Malamud's characters are locked into their repressed desires, their fear of the future. They spy on themselves, and deny each other. Like Nabokov's characters, although without the cerebral chill, they all talk alike. (Well, all Homer's heroes talked in Ionian hexameters.) In Malamud's instance, the talk has

elements of the city, the immigrant, a book culture broken in the mind: it is knotty; it needs gestures to accompany it. These are unfinished, or malformed people, tense from trying to make sense of their situations, suspicious of their emotions. I'm not sure just what attitude the bear takes toward them: he lacks Cheever's empathy; he is not as savage as Roth. He holds his people at a distance and makes them dance. Their awkward steps have a way of rubbing on the awareness until it hurts, as their talk rubs away at the language until it seems to cry for more words, better words, a different life.

DORIS LESSING'S BELIEF IN SURVIVAL

by Margaret Manning

THE SUMMER BEFORE THE DARK
by Doris Lessing
Knopf, \$6.95

Doris Lessing is one of the few novelists writing today who deals directly with ideas. She is never content simply to tell a story and be done with it. Her plots and characters, striking though they may be, are only excuses for rooting around in the gardens of the mind.

One of her particular themes has been the fate of the tremulous girl who becomes institutionalized by the inexorable demands of accommodation—to husbands, houses, children, lovers, colleagues—and the consequences in loneliness and loss if she should choose not to accommodate.

In her new novel, *The Summer Before the Dark*, she has come back again to this theme of woman's place in man's world. Women who feel that standing guard over the kitchen sink is ignoble, or should be, may find only a small grain of comfort in the book.

The news about Mrs. Lessing, though, is that she seems to have made an adjustment, allowed herself an evolving, if grudging, acceptance of the reality, and even of the interesting necessity, of the society she once condemned.

In her previous novels she has tried one after another of a series of

"answers" to the painful business of living, only to find that there is no abiding salvation in politics, literature, biology, dreams, marriage, fidelity, sex, even in apocalypse. In *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* she examined the possibilities of madness as the true sanity, a theorem that has achieved a certain glamour in other quarters, notably that of psychiatrists like R. D. Laing. But apparently that was too shaky a ledge for Mrs. Lessing to rest upon. She seems willing now to accept the forces of mystery and darkness in our lives but not to enshrine them.

Like all of her novels, particularly those since *The Golden Notebook*, this latest one is again a quest for individual meaning, a dogged preoccupation with self, accompanied by an undeviating determination somehow to prevail. Not surprisingly, Mrs. Lessing's heroines are sensitive, artistic, warm, undidactic, and although they are often loners (tough even if not tough-minded), they are ready to pay for their independence in whatever coin may be demanded of them. These women endure quite outside the concept of courage or heroism as enunciated by Hemingway and similar admirers of virile aplomb. They are not graceful. Their will is not to triumph or die, but simply to live, to make the best of all the horrors and embarrassments that lurk in

fortune's corner ready to assail them.

In *The Summer Before the Dark* the heroine, Kate Brown, forty-five years old, is also Mrs. Michael Brown. There are four grown children and Kate has spent her substance raising them and creating a nest. She seems to have been constantly occupied as a provider and organizer. Her husband is a successful neurologist and she has behaved appropriately to his station. She says to herself that she has always conformed, "scaled herself down," to the image of a sensible though respectably up-to-date wife of a doctor. Here, one thinks at first, is something of a letdown, a sudsy heroine for Doris Lessing, who in other novels has stared doom down. But she still has plenty to tell us, even if on this occasion she does make quite a job of getting there.

Kate's family, husband included, are all to be scattered for the summer: conferences, exchange medical post, plain tourism. She realizes with panic that her role as Mother Earth is ended. Then she takes a short-term job as a United Nations translator for a London food conference. She succeeds at it, is promoted to an administrative job, stays on. Her work—she is a conference organizer—is just a salaried adaptation of what she has always done at home, although sillier, she thinks, because so much more wasteful, a kind of false life superimposed upon the reality of starving people who are always, of course, starving elsewhere.

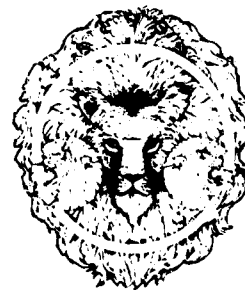
Kate suffers, or actually embraces, a psychic withdrawal from her family, which in any case is no more than a metaphor. Her motherhood is not so much real as symbolic, serving to separate her from her true nature. She decides, quite coldly, to have an affair with a younger man, an American, and they go off to Spain. This affair is a fiasco of illness and frustration, and in fact is no match for the diabolical family. Back in London, Kate must carry out the terms of her self-ordained contract of familial estrangement. She lies feverishly for a month in an expensive hotel. When she recovers at last, her dyed hair has grown halfway out and she has aged so terribly that she is for a time unrecognizable.

So is Kate Brown reborn. The remainder of the novel, and the most interesting part of it, deals with her true growing up. She rents a raffish flat near the Edgware Road with a beautiful young girl, Maureen, who is facing the same roller coaster—or treadmill—of choice that caught Kate twenty-five years earlier. Maureen has to decide "whether to do it," to marry, have children. Kate mothers her but cannot really help her. The novel ends with Kate going back to her own family. We have no idea what she will find, except that the children at least have done quite well enough without her. But that doesn't matter to her. What does matter is that she *can* go back and that she has made herself into "her own woman, well at ease." In fact, what Mrs. Lessing at long last is saying in answer to the question "Whither woman?" is "I don't know."

So much for freedom, revolution, fulfillment. So much for self-expression. So much, if you will, for the women's movement. Mrs. Lessing got into that anteroom of the twentieth century long before the rest of us and I respect her quiet exit from it. Perhaps she was repelled by the frantic, febrile, gynecological jumpiness of it. She still can say that "the faces and movements of most middle-aged women are those of prisoners or slaves," but she is no longer able to give them any more sympathy than did the Delphic Oracle when it said, "Know thyself."

As novel rather than ideological springboard, *The Summer Before the Dark* is vintage Lessing. She has great natural fictional gifts but may choose to circumvent them with disdain when she is worrying an idea. She manipulates her characters unmercifully: fortuitous events, unmotivated actions abound. Her symbolism tends to be crashing. In *The Summer Before the Dark* Kate is occupied for pages carrying a wounded seal overland to the sea in her totally remembered, ever recurring dreams. Amazingly enough, the seal represents her own life! Mrs. Lessing's preoccupation with self frequently muffles her other characters. She can have such a grotesquely tin ear that she can give this bit of dialogue to a normal American male: "It would be so

Aslan



The Lion of Judah in Never-Never Land:

God, Man & Nature in C. S. Lewis's *Narnia Tales*
by Kathryn Lindskoog

For all those who are captivated by C. S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*, here is an eager exploration of the riches hidden within them.

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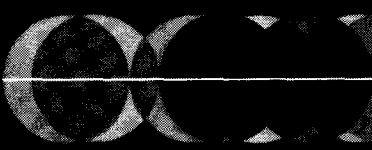
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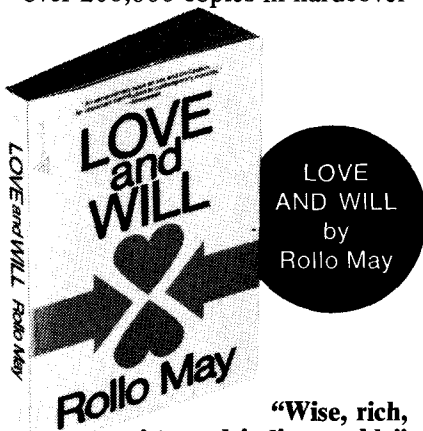
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lovely if you did have the time, it would be such a pity to waste the free place in the car." Sometimes she writes heavily, awkwardly, with an exasperating lack of precision. For instance: "What he was good at was to be the supplier of some kind of invisible fluid, or emanation, like a queen termite, whose spirit (or some such word—electricity) filled the nest, making a whole of individuals who could have no other connection." But why not find the right word, not some such word?

These annoyances, however, must be put aside, because what is most interesting about Doris Lessing is the journey she is making, one of the important instinctual journeys of the twentieth century.

We have suffered a time of irrational behavior of men and nations, fragmentation of lives, erosion of confidence and continuity in both society and cultural tradition. We have all too easily accepted that failure of nerve that Henry James called "the imagination of disaster." Doris Lessing has been compared to Simone de Beauvoir and Mary McCarthy because of her passionate involvement in so many of the tumultuous issues of the twentieth century—nihilistic racism, atomic devastation, political repression, the poisoning of the earth—but most of all in the cause of women. Her concern and active participation in social causes and movements have provided her with material for her fiction, but the pertinent fact is that as she has gone from one platform, one point, to another, she has learned how to live, how to wiggle out of narrowness, out of naïveté, even out of the period's catch-all angst.

When Mrs. Lessing was a young woman growing up in Rhodesia, she joined the Communist Party because it was virtually the only group doing anything about the degraded, and to the whites degrading, status of the Africans. It was a number of years before she realized she didn't belong in the arms of Communism, but when she left the Party, it was quietly. No public tears, no recantations. She had learned, but felt no bitterness. Or if she did, she felt no need to exploit it. Later she seized upon literature—"Art"—as a deliverance. And the freedom of women. And practically every other panacea

of the Western world. All have been not so much abandoned as absorbed. What remains, really, is passionate intelligence.

Her center has always been a solid insistence that the individual mattered, mattered gloriously, even if with the passage of years her voice has come to be tinged more deeply with irony. Her view has not been truly societal, no matter how outraged, in the same sense that the outer-directed conscience of Charles Dickens, for instance, illumined Victorian England. She has always looked inward, and increasingly since *The Golden Notebook* in 1962, a brilliant novel about (among other things) self-emancipated, as distinct from free, women who are vulnerable as well. They aren't striding about the barricades shouting at the enemy to shoot them down; they're somewhere undercover evolving their own intensely imagined moral life and brewing a pot of tea. Or perhaps of hemlock.

She is not an observer of shifting manners. Manners are neither important nor comic to her; they are simply irrelevant. She is hacking away at reality: cruelty, sex, politics, death. But these subjects are treated in a large-minded way that is truly valiant.

What makes Mrs. Lessing most angry is what she insists is the easy refusal of almost everyone to feel. She has energy in abundance, and an acute if fervent mind. McCarthy and De Beauvoir are certainly more fastidious thinkers but there is something cool and bloodless about them compared to Doris Lessing. She is a wounded woman who after repeated bashings still cares for men. She is not logical or analytical. She is simply full of passion, ready to take enormous risks. At times perhaps her stockings sag, or she talks too much. More often she gives in to a justifiable sense of elitism in her desire to be one with the great novelists of the past (she calls them, and herself, "architects of the soul"). But her woes are not trifling. She refuses to tremble. If she weeps, it is in private. She wants to survive and she wants the earth to survive at a time when many other writers seem to have a sickish half-wish for extinction. Mrs. Lessing represents what remains of the continuum of humanism in this difficult century.

THE PERIPATETIC REVIEWER

by Edward Weeks

WITNESS TO HISTORY, 1929-1969
by Charles E. Bohlen
Norton, \$12.50

This memoir, as the author says, is by a diplomat "lucky enough to have witnessed and participated in every major development in American-Soviet relations from, 1929 to 1969." Since Bohlen does not type and not even he can read his handwriting, he dictated a vast chronology of 700,000 words and then spent more than two years checking, cutting, and amplifying. He wished to relate the events as they happened with the impressions that occurred to him at the time, and with enough explanation to quiet the more extreme critics. Revision of one's text is as arduous as, and more exasperating than, the initial composition, and in this task he was helped by his questioning editor, Robert H. Phelps. The book which emerged is of major historical importance, not so much for its style as for its perception and the light which it sheds on the statesmen and the major crises of our time.

"Chip" Bohlen was one of the staff which Ambassador William C. Bullitt took with him to Moscow in February, 1934. Bohlen's most evident qualifications were his Harvard degree, his fluency in French acquired at the insistence of his mother who had lived for four years at the United States Embassy in Paris, and his working knowledge of Russian as a language specialist in the State Department.

It was a picked group: Loy Henderson, who had been studying the Soviet Union for years; George Kennan, who like Bohlen had been trained for the assignment; and the gay, good-humored Charles Thayer. They shared the Ambassador's belief that it would be possible to establish friendly relations with the Russians and there was a brief honeymoon when the corps de ballet was entertained at Spaso House; when Bohlen and Thayer went to the Caucasus to shoot gazelle after a hilarious drinking bout on the

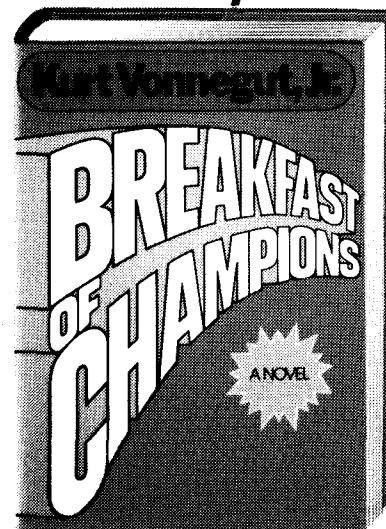
train with Marshal Budenny; and when it was still thought that Stalin would be approachable. "It was not until the extent of the purges became known," writes the author, "and the Hitler-Stalin pact was signed that my attitude toward the Soviet Union hardened."

In the summer of 1938 Bohlen was made the senior Russian-language officer in charge of political reporting. Specifically, he had to determine the Soviet intentions: whether Stalin would join France and Britain in collective security against Germany or seek an accommodation with Hitler. In this he received surprising help from Johnny Herwarth, his tennis friend in the German Embassy, who tipped him off about the Soviet-German rapprochement before the pact was signed. Johnny's motive, as he learned later in passing on this highly secret information, was his hope that the West might do something to prevent the deal, because he was convinced that otherwise it would lead to World War II. And this is the reason why Washington knew the hard truth long before London. When in 1940 Ambassador Joseph Grew in Tokyo asked for a Russian specialist to keep his eye on Soviet-Japanese relations, Bohlen was transferred to Grew's staff, and he was in the East when Germany attacked Russia. "I had not," he writes, "expected Hitler to do anything so stupid—nor had Stalin." Then came Pearl Harbor.

On his release from internment in Japan, Bohlen resumed his direct contact with the Soviet Union. Now the crucial issue was to assist the Russian war effort and at the same time prepare for the invasion of Europe. At a meeting of the Foreign Ministers in Moscow, Bohlen acted both as adviser and translator for the American delegation. This was to test his stamina as never before, for in addition to translating he had to take notes and, after the negotiators had retired, dictate the record of each day's meeting, a task not finished until early morning. The

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Ministers' meeting was a prelude to Teheran and Yalta and in each conference at Roosevelt's right hand Bohlen performed his dual role with a skill which won him the admiration of FDR, Harry Hopkins, Cordell Hull, and Averell Harriman. I find the pages in which he was checking the utterances of Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt utterly fascinating: Roosevelt improvising at the risk of being imprecise; Stalin, cigarette in hand, implacable, never showing any agitation, as he taunted Churchill; and Churchill with his visual approach to speaking. "He would start a sentence and then repeat it, sometimes two or three times, before the picture would come to his mind. Then he would take off on his grand oratory." As Bohlen was quick to observe, the effort to inject humor was usually disastrous. When Stalin with his sardonic smile suggested that some 50,000 or perhaps 100,000 German military officers should be liquidated, Churchill missed the joke and took it seriously. Nor was Bohlen easily fooled. When Hopkins asked whether the Soviet Union was

prepared to honor the Yalta Agreement, Stalin said testily, "The Soviet Union always honors its word," then lowering his voice he added, "except in case of extreme necessity." The Russian translator omitted the last phrase, then Bohlen said to him in English, "I believe there is a little more, Pavlov."

What is so good in this book is the author's judgment of men. Bohlen says that Molotov's "granitelike resistance" was a major factor in Hitler's decision to attack the Soviet Union; he says that Alger Hiss had no influence on FDR at Yalta; he speaks of Admiral Leahy "in his snapping-turtle manner"; he calls Edward Stettinius "a decent man of considerable innocence"; he acknowledges his deep concern after Yalta, where Hopkins had been so desperately ill and where the President himself was failing, and reproaches himself for not having attended the President on his home trip on the cruiser *Quincy*. (But FDR had not asked for him.) Dulles was his most disagreeable chief, who "exiled" him to Manila; General Marshall the one he most ad-

mired. He writes eloquently of his career-long friendship with George Kennan. Kennan, the man of forethought and apprehension; Bohlen, sharing much of the same pessimism, as he got the job done. We were fortunate to depend on two such extraordinary diplomats, both, as this book attests, great gentlemen.

THE OTHER ONE

by Julian Green, translated from the French by Bernard Wall
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$6.95

This is the story of the conflicts of faith and of an infatuation which has its beginning and end in Copenhagen. To that lovely, easygoing capital in the summer of 1939 comes Roger, a Frenchman of twenty-four whose curly black hair and fine physique attract attention in that land of the blond. He knows that war is imminent and he is there for one last fling before being called up. Roger can have his pick of girls on the boulevards, but craves something better, and he employs a letter to Miss Ott, who has a reputation for arranging love affairs for foreigners. In her early fencing with Roger, it is apparent that she enjoys acting as a procuress; but for some reason she will not encourage his attention to Karin, with whom Roger has had a chance meeting at Tivoli. Karin at nineteen is as attractive as she is elusive, and quite aware of the admiration she excites. Roger's pique turns to passion; he learns that she is alone in the world, supporting herself as an illustrator, her Lutheran religion is her anchor, and she is still a virgin. In his pursuit, he traces her to church and, experienced lover that he is, he detects in her notes to him and her sudden reappearances a sign of yielding. She fends him off, disturbed by his agnosticism, but in their walks in the "adventurous wood," in their drives together, and with the Frenchman's ardent attention, surrender is inevitable.

In the first half of the novel it is Roger's infatuation which Mr. Green has evoked with such skill. When the story resumes in 1949, it is Karin's plight which stirs our pity. Her days and nights with Roger, before she lost him to the war, left her defenseless, without faith, an easy catch for the young

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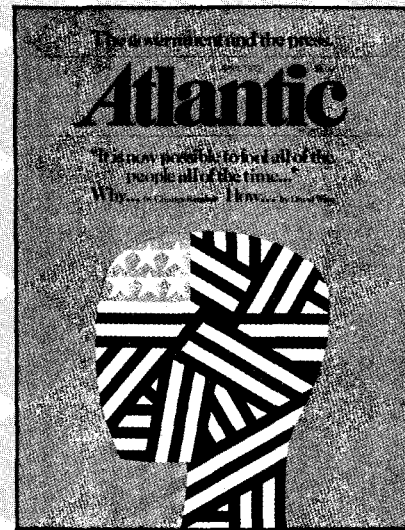
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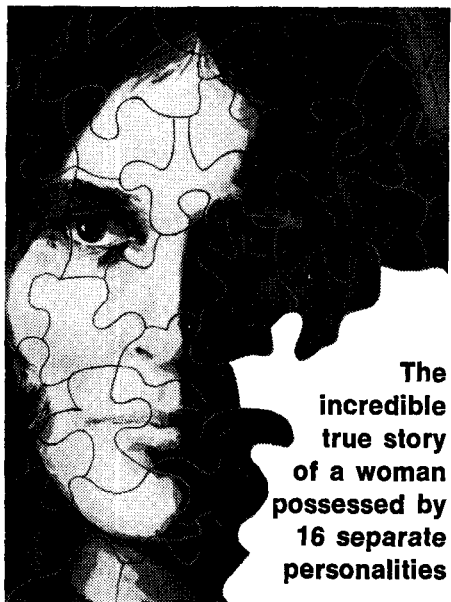
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German officers in the Occupation. Now at twenty-nine, reviled as "the German woman," Karin is ostracized. When Roger reappears to plead forgiveness, it is she who is aroused and infatuated, he who is resistant. During his four years in a German prison camp, he has become a Catholic convert and conceives it his mission to redeem her—a reversal of their roles which is skillfully developed. But one cannot help wondering why he is so immune to her appeals. In Mr. Green's suave prose the attractions of the flesh are much more compelling than the devotion to the spirit.

HOME TO THE WILDERNESS

by Sally Carrighar
Houghton Mifflin, \$7.95

In the book which established her reputation, *One Day on Beetle Rock*, Miss Carrighar told of the vivid world of wildlife which frequented Beetle Rock in the High Sierras on a day in June. In her autobiography she tells of the human jungle into which she was born and of how she escaped. Her birth was dreadful; high forceps were used and her mother's coccyx was broken, a traumatic experience which left the parent with an abhorrence for her disfigured baby. Sally's childhood was bleak: she knew she was unloved and was constantly reminded that she was unstable; her mother's impatience was paranoid and in one paroxysm of rage she all but strangled the child. "Waking and sleeping I lived with two nightmares: the memory of my mother's face as she came into that room, and the pressure of her hand on my neck." Nor did the antagonism lessen as the daughter's character developed. The worst motives were attributed to any irregularity, and not unnaturally, the girl developed a heart murmur which increased under the strain. In all of this her father might have played a protective part had he not been so absorbed in his business.

Sally had found in music an emotional outlet; at Wellesley College in the person of Miss Katharine Liddell she had an English instructor who began to tap her feeling for words. But the elation was too much for her. "The heart problems," she writes, "began to creep up," and at the end of the second year she was sent home to rest, a

disappointment which her mother solaced with the words, "You think your childhood has been a tragedy and that I am to blame for it."

It is Miss Carrighar's erratic climb toward liberation and a happiness she found on Beetle Rock which enliven the last half of this grueling confession. She has her first taste of the Ozarks as a fishing guide; in Hollywood she learns to write movie adaptations of stage plays; in San Francisco, with no training other than her native intelligence, she wrote articles for a financial sheet, *The Coast Investor*; and during the Depression she was on the verge of starvation, so hopeless that a bottle of sleeping pills seemed the only answer. When the landlady revived her, what brought her life into focus was a flock of small birds, linnets, that ventured inside her room to be fed, and after that the common sense which directed her to the best psychiatrist she could find, Dr. Carl Renz. How he set her on her feet and how she was passed from biologist to biologist, until at last her knowledge of wildlife was recognized, is the triumphant part of this book, so well summed up in the words of Dr. Robert Orr: "She comes in here and asks questions I have not thought of before, and we begin taking down books and discover that no one else has thought of them; so then she goes up in the mountains and tries to find the answers herself."

LIFE & LETTERS CONTRIBUTORS

John Leonard is editor of the New York Times Book Review and author of *This Pen for Hire*.

Margaret Manning reviews books for the Boston Globe.

Edward Weeks and Phoebe Adams write regularly in these pages.

POETS IN THIS ISSUE

Peter Davison's (page 51) autobiographical book, *Half Remembered*, will be published in August.

David Ignatow (page 55) was recently awarded a Guggenheim fellowship.

Mark Rudman (page 71) has completed his first book of poems, called *Scrapings*.

Ann Stanford (page 94) edited the new anthology, *The Women Poets in English*.

SHORT REVIEWS: BOOKS

by Phoebe Adams

RABBIT BOSS by Thomas Sanchez. Knopf, \$7.95. The destruction of Indian culture and the parallel ruination of wild country by the white man are the themes interwoven in this novel. As themes, they are grim, but Mr. Sanchez presents them through a dazzle of lively episodes, shifting points of view and time, and convincing characters. The book is a first novel; it reads like the work of an expert veteran.

WISCONSIN DEATH TRIP by Michael Lesy. Pantheon, \$15.00. The author has rounded up some dour old photographs, lifted all the disasters from the newspaper files of a rural Wisconsin area between 1885 and 1900, spiced them up with quotations from the likes of Hamlin Garland and Sinclair Lewis, and added his own eclectic borrowings from the theories of assorted psychological schools. He claims the result is a new approach to history. One can only hope that he is right, because it is not pleasant to think that laziness and self-indulgence are the standard habits of historians.

A BOOK OF DREAMS by Peter Reich. Harper & Row, \$5.95. The author is the son of Wilhelm Reich, the still controversial psychiatrist and biophysicist whose activities with orgone energy and rainmaking machines ultimately landed him in prison, where he died. All this happened while the son was a child, and the memoir he has now written is a touching, eloquent, and curiously ambivalent mixture of juvenile memories, dreams, and adult questionings. Mr. Reich is well aware of the enormous influence his father had upon him. He remains uncertain of the value of the influence. Readers are likely to share his puzzlement, but also to find the puzzle fascinating.

THE OBSCENE BIRD OF NIGHT by Jose Donoso. Knopf, \$7.95. Set in Chile, this novel of monsters, freaks, witchcraft, heresy, and lost or concealed identity offers so many pos-

sible interpretations that its meaning becomes the whim of the individual reader. The book is flamboyantly inventive and full of elaborately developed fantasies reminiscent of Garcia Márquez. But Mr. Donoso does not have Márquez' acute sense of timing, and frequently lets his visionary set pieces run on too long, to the point where the reader ceases to be impressed and begins to wonder when, if ever, the author will get back to business and his story. Translated by Hardie St. Martin and Leonard Mades.

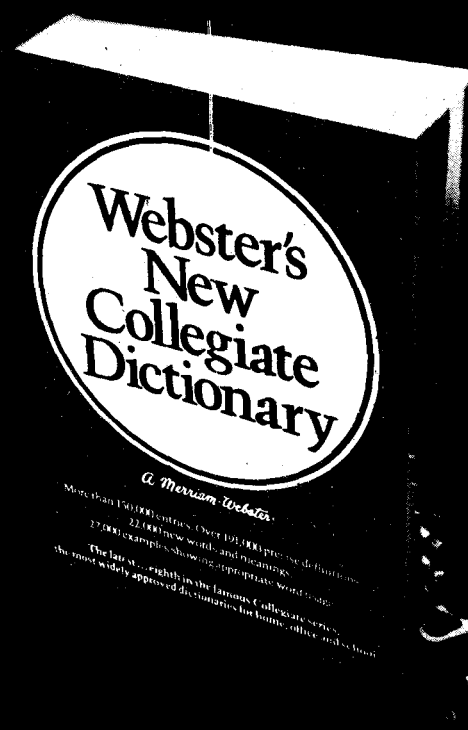
BLAME THE DEAD by Gavin Lyall. Viking, \$6.95. A suspense novel, properly fast-moving and violent, and notable for the shell-game ingenuity with which the author substitutes one villain for another, keeping everyone but himself in a state of chronic confusion.

ALICE AND ME by William Judson. Arthur Fields, \$6.95. According to the publisher, William Judson is the "pseudonym of a bestselling novelist." One can see why. Behind the clever writing in this novel lurks a

mixture of geriatric sexual fantasy and bloodthirsty racism that no sensible person would wish to acknowledge as his own in public. In case anyone is really curious, the hero of the work is a frontier relic who drifts into New York, acquires a young mistress, has some trouble with burglary, and decides to combat crime by lurking about with a rifle and gleefully murdering pickpockets. The poetic justice ending is a tacked-on affair which does not mitigate the general nastiness of the tale.

SYBIL by Flora Rheta Schreiber. Regnery, \$8.95. Sybil is the name concealing the identity of a young woman who, when well along in psychiatric treatment, abruptly revealed a second personality, then a third and a fourth, and ultimately a positive tribe. They were of various ages, voices, and temperaments. Two of them insisted they were boys. All of them had originated as defenses against Sybil's mother, a woman who ranks high on any list of disastrous parents. The story of Sybil and company is interesting, as

water bed



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The 12 winners of the 1973 NBA.

ARTS AND LETTERS

ARTHUR M. WILSON
Diderot
Oxford University Press

BIOGRAPHY

JAMES THOMAS FLEXNER
George Washington:
Anguish and Farewell
(1793-1799)
Little, Brown and Company

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

URSULA LE GUIN
The Farthest Shore
(Illustrated by Gail Garraty)
Atheneum

CONTEMPORARY AFFAIRS

FRANCES FITZGERALD
Fire in the Lake:
The Vietnamese and the
Americans in Vietnam
Atlantic-Little, Brown

FICTION

JOHN BARTH
Chimera
Random House
JOHN WILLIAMS
Augustus
The Viking Press

HISTORY

ROBERT M. MYERS
The Children of Pride
Yale University Press

ISAIAH TRUNK
Judenrat
Macmillan

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

SYDNEY E. AHLSTROM
A Religious History
of the American People
Yale University Press

POETRY

A. R. AMMONS
Collected Poems: 1951-1971
W. W. Norton & Company

THE SCIENCES

GEORGE B. SCHALLER
The Serengeti Lion:
A Study of
Predator-Prey Relations
University of Chicago Press

TRANSLATION

ALLEN MANDELBAUM
The Aeneid of Virgil
University of California Press



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accounts of the rare problem of multiple personality invariably are. It is even, at times, comical. But the manner of the telling is annoying, because the information derived, presumably, from the psychiatrist's records has been complicated with novelistic trimmings, and one is left very uncertain where fact ends and ornamental liberties begin.

THE MORRO CASTLE by Hal Burton. Viking, \$7.95. For disaster-at-sea buffs, a reconstruction of the burning of the *Morro Castle* in 1934, with the captain dead in his cabin and all too many of the officers and crew behaving with irresponsible incompetence. Mr. Burton's attempt to give the affair something of that eerie dramatic rightness that distinguishes the *Titanic* wreck by dragging in reflections on the Great Depression is neither necessary nor successful, but his account of the *Morro's* destruction is highly satisfactory.

BEYOND STONEHENGE by Gerald S. Hawkins. Harper & Row, \$7.95. Mr. Hawkins is the astronomer who caused a stir, a few years ago, by claiming that Stonehenge was built as an observatory. He caused exasperation, as well, by his innocent but mistaken assumption that nobody else had previously noticed the orientation of the place. His present book ranges far beyond Stonehenge and is almost overtactful in giving credit to everyone who has ever cast an eye at the celestial possibilities of Egyptian temples, Mayan pyramids, or Ohio mounds. What Mr. Hawkins found, what he made of it, and what defeated him are equally interesting.

THE GREEN GENE by Peter Dickinson. Pantheon, \$5.95. Science fiction, mystery, social satire, all mixed up together in an amusing but uncomfortable entertainment.

Portions drawn from the following books have recently appeared in *The Atlantic*:

HOME FROM THE WAR by Robert Jay Lifton. Simon and Schuster, \$7.95.

A SECOND FLOWERING by Malcolm Cowley. Viking, \$8.95.

THE POLITICS OF LYING by David Wise. Random House, \$8.95.

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KENNEDY FOR PRESIDENT bumperstickers 5/\$1.00. Buttons 4/\$1.00. Kennedy, 4624 Mercier, Kansas City, Missouri 64112.

CERAMIC MUGS. 16oz. high quality with official crest in permanent color. Major League Baseball, NFL, I&NHL, A&ABA, Sports Car Clubs, most Colleges & Universities. Ideal gifts. 1 mug for \$5.00, 4 mugs for \$17.50 plus \$1.00 for postage and handling. Print name of teams or schools desired. Send check or M.O. to Neo-Ceramics Mugs, P.O. Box 95, Washington Crossing, Pa. 18977.

LEARN CARTOONING AT HOME. Veteran approved. Free bulletin. Cartooning, Box 7069AM, Colorado Springs, CO. 80933.

ARMAGEDDON "BATTLE" not biblical. Brochure free. Research, Box 42, Suncity, California 92381.

WINE LOG AND DIARY, Large Capacity. Bargain at \$7.95 postpaid. Wine, P.O. Box 1065, Miami, Kendall, Fla. 33156.

COMMUNITARIAN VILLAGE. Seeking communitarian pioneers to help plan and build cooperative village community. New community conference in June. Write: Communities, Rt. 1, Box 1911, Oroville, CA 95965.

TEENAGERS URGENTLY NEEDED! New-exciting way to earn \$\$\$\$ and help Vietnam orphans. Full-part time. No selling. Rush \$1 for beginner's kit. Young World, 720 Washington, Grand Haven, Michigan 49417.

ASPIRING YOUNG VIOLIST needs benefactor. Please write Hector, Box 331, Madison, VA 22727.

PERSONALIZED MEMO PADS. Free catalog shows 46 different designs! Leonardo & Michelangelo, Box 24785, Los Angeles 90024.

SINCERELY interested in marriage? Social Introduction Service, Box 1547, Eugene, Oregon 97401.

NEW YORK CITY REMAILING 25¢ single—\$3.50 monthly rate. Pruitt, 609 St. Johns Pl., Brooklyn, 11238.

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Per word (single insertion).....	90¢
Per word 6 times in one contract year.....	80¢
Per word 12 times in one contract year.....	70¢

10 word minimum. Post Office Box Number count as two words.

No charge for Zip Code.

Copy should be received by the 15th of the second month prior to issue.

Payment for initial insertion must accompany copy. Adjustments on word count will be made if necessary. We do not accept Atlantic box numbers at this time.

For additional information and rates for Classified Display advertising write:

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, Classified Department,
8 Arlington Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116, (617) 536-9500.

MISCELLANY

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"SWIM ON LAND" with EXER-COR! Scientific exercise device restores fitness. Quick. Compact. All ages. Laboratory tested. Brochure. CISCO, Box 403, Dept. J-4, Lincoln, Illinois 62656

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PUZZLING MOEBIUS ZIP. Unpredictable one-sided Moebius Strip in zipper form. When unzipped, two loops, one loop, or two knotted loops can result! Triple Moebius Strip puzzle produces one-sided strip **between one side** of two-sided ZIP!! ZIP, Loops, Instructions \$3.00. Satisfaction guaranteed. Statidyne (AMA), 1006 Iliff, Pacific Palisades, Calif. 90272.

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HELP FIGHT HIGH PRICES! Display "Boycott Meat" bumpersticker. Send \$1. Consumer Services, 318 N. Main, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901.

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CONFIDENTIAL PERSONALITY PROFILES

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Certified Writing Analyst

P.O. Box 327

Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

NOTICE

Because of rising printing costs, The Atlantic will raise the price of its classified ads by 10¢ per word beginning with the July, 1973 issue. The new rates will be as follows:

1-time rate.....\$1.00 per word
6-time rate.....\$.90 per word
12-time rate.....\$.80 per word

SUFFIELD WRITER-READER CONFERENCE

Suffield, Conn. June 24-July 1

Poetry: William Packard and James Scully; Non-fiction: Dr. William Nolen; Fiction: Henry Van Dyke and Jon Appleby; Writing for Films: Janet Sternburg; Marketing and Editing: Knox Burger; Special Lecturers: Pare Lorentz, Ellsworth Grant, and Robert Crichton. Daily seminars. Evening lectures by staff and special lecturers. Manuscript consultation with staff members. Scholarships for writers, teachers, college students. **Jeanne B. Krochalis, Director, Suffield Academy, Suffield, Connecticut 06078. Write for brochure.**

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Copy _____

I enclose \$_____ for _____ words

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

RATES

Per word (single insertion) 10 word minimum \$1.00
Per word 6 times in one contract year .. 90¢
Per word 12 times in one contract year .. 80¢

Copy should be received by the 15th of second month prior to issue. Payment for initial insertion must accompany copy. Adjustments on word count will be made if necessary.

For two or more insertions, payment must be received by the 1st of month prior to date of each issue.

Post Office Box Number count as two words. No charge for Zip Code. We do not accept Atlantic box numbers at this time.

Please write for additional information and rates for Classified Display advertising.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY
Classified Department
8 Arlington Street
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If you have a taste for beautiful books and sound investments, you will appreciate membership in The Limited Editions Club.

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Avon, Connecticut 06001

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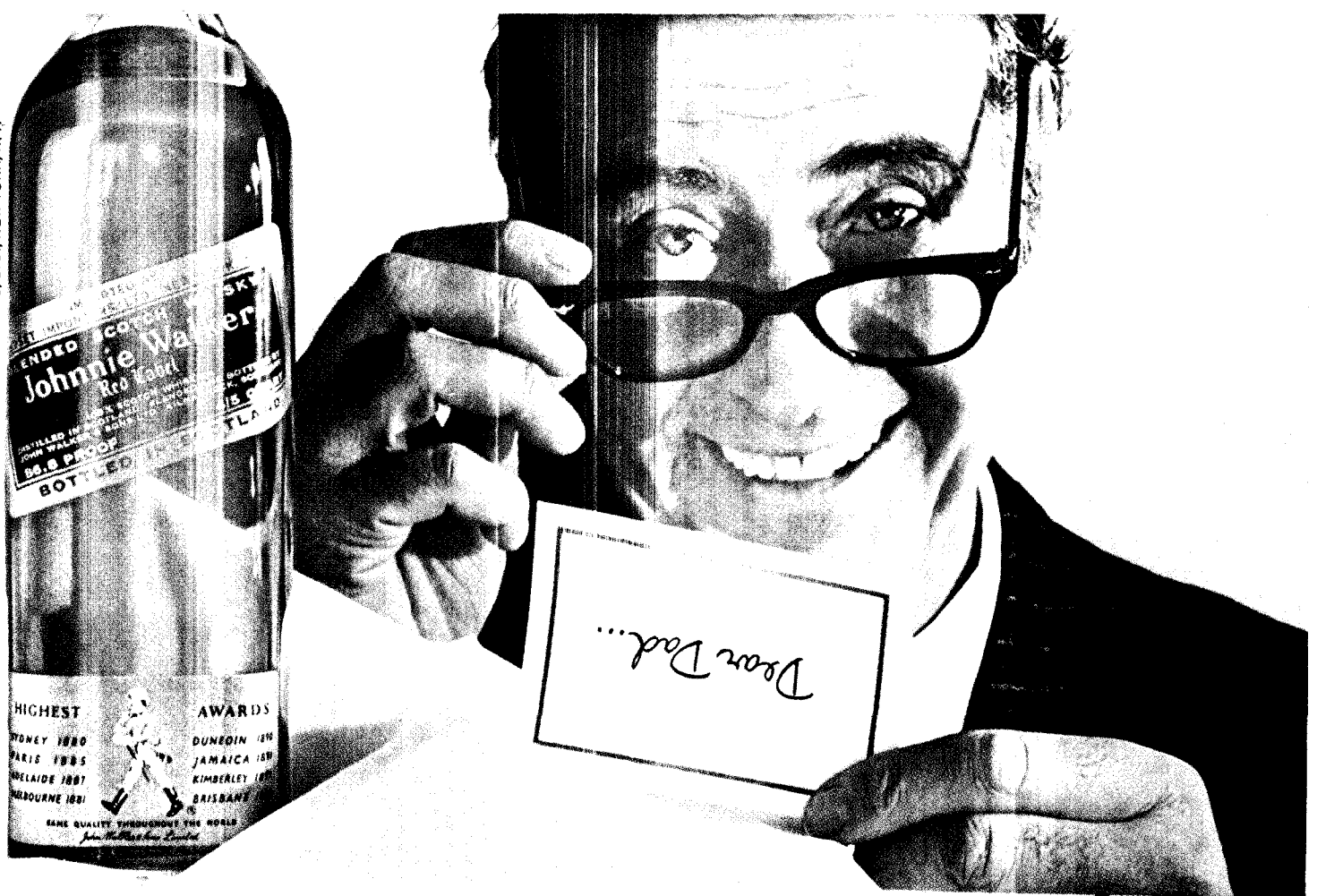
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In Outrage at Their Loneliness

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in your eye.

For the next 22 years
I was the hole in your pocket.

Now that I'm earning
my own bed and board...

I hope this bottle of
Johnnie Walker Red makes
me the twinkle in your
eye again.

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Andy



**Break out the Gilbey's Gin, boys,
and keep your collins dry!**

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